

KEY



**COUNTRY
WITH A PLAN**

**PAT
SLOAN**

BOOKS

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No. 13

COUNTRY WITH A PLAN

A Key to the Soviet Union

by

PAT SLOAN

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COUNTRY WITH A PLAN

1. Why Russia is Important

“RUSSIA,” or more correctly, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, covers more than one sixth of the earth's surface. It is second in size only to the British Empire. In the West it borders on the Third Reich; in the East on Mongolia, Manchuria and Korea (Japan). In the North it borders on the Arctic Ocean—which it has turned into a regular steamship route—and in the South it almost touches the frontier of India in the Himalayas and Pamirs. On the Black Sea it has a Riviera rivalling that of France on the Mediterranean.

Soviet territory includes sub-tropical deserts in Kazakhstan and Turkmenia on the borderlands of Europe and Asia; rich tea, tobacco, and newly-planted rubber plantations, vast corn growing territories in the famous Black Earth region of Ukraine; and the longest Arctic coast-line of any country, now studded with meteorological and radio stations, more and more of which are being equipped with their own hot-houses for the growing of fresh vegetables during the period of Arctic summer. Throughout the Soviet Union great hydro-electric stations are being built which harness some of the most powerful rivers in Europe and Asia. In the Far East industry has been so developed that this territory is now practically self-supporting, has its own war industries, and no longer depends on the longest railway in the world, the Trans-Siberian railway, for its supplies.

Communications throughout this vast area are being extended yearly. Already the Soviet Union has the longest distance of air-lines in the world, and its air traffic in terms of goods and passengers exceeds that of any other country.

The Soviet Union is therefore important because it is such a vast stretch of territory, embracing a large variety of climates and natural resources, which it is very rapidly utilising.

The U.S.S.R. embraces many nations, and the term “Russia” is not a correct description of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. For, though all this territory and more formed the Russian Empire until 1917, to-day Russia is only one Soviet Republic among 16 equals. On the territory of the U.S.S.R. there are 293,000,000 people living in 16 national republics: Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaidjan, Georgia, Armenia, Turkmenia, Tadjikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Karelo-Finland, Moldavia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia. The largest of these is the Russian, with over 100 million people; while the two smallest, Turkmenia and

Tadjikistan, have populations of about half a million each. Each of these national republics is an equal state within the Union.

In addition to the nations of the 16 Union republics there are a vast number of smaller nationalities, including Germans with their own republic on the Volga, between 4 and 5 million Jews, and numerous national groups with only 20,000 or fewer citizens. In the Constitution of the Soviet Union more than 40 nationalities are mentioned by name. The U.S.S.R. is therefore important as a Union of equal nations.

The Soviet Union is absolutely different in its social, economic and political organization from any other country of the world. As we shall see later, it is a Socialist country, a thing which can be said of no country outside the U.S.S.R. at the present time. By this we mean that all the land, banks, industry and trading organizations are public, not private, property. The enormous implication of this will be realized in the course of this booklet.

The Soviet Union is also important to-day because it is the most powerful country in the world. It is the one country with a government which says with confidence: Our territory will never be successfully invaded. True, until some months ago, this could also be said about the U.S.A. But that is no longer the case. For to-day the American government is warning its people that America is not secure against possible invasion. The Soviet Union is the one country in the world which has a government which asserts confidently that it can successfully repel any attack.

As a vast territory, second only in size to the British Empire, and with a variety of national resources and climates which also rival the British Empire, as the greatest union of many equal nations which the world has ever seen, as a Socialist country, and as the world's most powerful state, Russia is of vital importance to-day.

Because of this, it is necessary that the facts about Russia be widely known. And they are not widely known, because in general it is hard to obtain information. It is hard to obtain information, not because the information is not available but because the millionaires who own our newspapers do not wish their readers to have a sympathetic understanding of Russia. And their attitude is not without reason: The fact is that under the Soviet system there is no opportunity to become or to remain a millionaire newspaper proprietor. The U.S.S.R. happens to be a country without millionaires and without newspaper proprietors! So no wonder our newspaper owners are not ready to spread knowledge of the U.S.S.R. of a kind that might lead to a greater understanding and sympathy for the Soviet system!

All the more necessary therefore is it that people should be informed by other means as to the truth about Russia. This booklet is one of those means.

2. A Land without Landlords

EVERYONE who pays rent, and most people do, knows what it is to have a landlord. Nobody ever has any objection to a reduction in rent, and many tenants' associations in this country have from time to time forced reductions in rent sometimes amounting to even as much as 20 or 25 per cent. But if landlords can be forced by an organization of tenants to reduce rents by 20 per cent., why not by 40, 80 or 100 per cent? Why not in fact abolish landlords?

The Soviet Union is the one country in the world where landlords have been abolished. Immediately on the setting up of the Soviet Government in 1917, the land was nationalised, that is, it was made public instead of private property.

In the countryside the landlords had owned large estates, while the peasants scraped along from year to year on little strips of land insufficient to save them from famine after a bad summer. The Soviet Government, however, told the peasants: Take over the landed estates, divide up the land among yourselves, select your own committees to see that the job is done fairly.

To-day, wherever the Red Army goes, it brings with it this same system and encourages the dividing up of the landed estates among those who live by their work on the land. The story is told of how, in September 1939, when the Red Army crossed the then Polish frontier, the peasants of a certain Byelorussian village at once decided to divide up the landlord's estate, even before the Red Army arrived. So they sent to the next village to borrow a surveyor's tape-measure. "Why do you want the tape-measure?" they were asked. "To divide the land among ourselves," was the reply. "Are you mad?" "No: but the Red Army is coming." After which they received the answer: "Sorry, brothers, but we shall need the tape-measure ourselves."

From 1917 onwards the land has been public property in the Soviet Union. Nobody can draw rent from land. The land is used by individual peasants, by collective farms, by state farms, by industrial enterprises, for housing, and for public buildings. It is the Soviet authorities that grant the use of the land rent free for each particular purpose: no private individual can control the use of the land, or make money out of letting it, or of buying or selling it.

In London, before the reconstruction of Waterloo Bridge could be begun, there were years of tedious negotiation with the landlords at either side of the river with regard to the terms on which they would sell their land. Speaking in the House of Commons in July 1939, Mr. Herbert Morrison pointed out that a roundabout on the north side of the river would cost £2,000,000. This sum had to include not only compensation to existing property-owners but com-

pensation for loss of profits which they might have made in the future with the development of the property! In Moscow a number of bridges were built over the river during the past five years and there were no landlords to hold up the work.

All housing properties were taken over by public authorities in Russia in 1917 and 1918. No longer did landlords live in comfort on rents drawn from houses which they let, or from blocks of flats. Nor did the churches and monasteries any longer draw an income from rent. (In London some of the worst slums in Paddington, and some of the least reputable areas in the West End, are church property and the church draws a handsome income from the letting of these houses.)

In place of the landlord of a block of flats, a tenants' committee was elected by the inhabitants. To-day the local housing authorities appoint a manager for each block, who works side by side with an elected tenants' committee.

In place of rent a small sum is charged, never exceeding 10 per cent. of the income of the tenants, and usually considerably less, and this money is used entirely for the purpose of keeping the building in good repair, and in providing social services—such as a communal playroom for the children, or a garden for the use of the tenants.

The blocks of flats are themselves owned either by the local Soviet (or local Council as we would call it), or by industrial enterprises (all of which are state owned), or by housing co-operatives.

A housing Co-operative Society is formed by a group of people who want to build a block of flats for their own use. They subscribe part of the necessary capital; they receive the rest from the public authorities and after the block is built each member of the co-operative has the right to a flat. Every member may sell or exchange such a flat if he or she desires to move elsewhere.

In cases where individuals let accommodation to others for rent, they are constantly in danger of being deprived of that extra space by the local authority, on the ground that they are indulging in a form of landlordism, and at the same time on the ground that they clearly do not require all the space which they are occupying.

The Soviet Union has proved to the world that landlords are an expensive luxury which a nation can well do without. Having done away with them, the masses of the people—the majority of whom are tenants in every country—no longer have to keep their landlords living in comfort out of the rents they pay for the right to have a home to live in. Public authorities, under such conditions, no longer are faced with the permanent financial problem of having to bribe the local private landlords by paying an enormous price out of public money for the right to use local land in the service of the public.

3. Planned Production

MORE than three-quarters of all the people of Britain are either working for a living themselves, or are the dependants of somebody who is. And of those that are working, all but a bare 6 per cent. are working for somebody else, in somebody else's factory, down somebody else's coal mine, as an assistant in somebody else's shop, or as a clerk in somebody else's office. The miner works in the pit belonging to the colliery company; the railway worker works for the railway shareholders; the shop assistant works for Mr. Montague Burton, or for the Boot family, or the shareholders in Woolworths, Lyons or Marks and Spencer.

Some people, a few, work on their own account, without employing anybody else. And still fewer are the big owners: the big bankers, shareholders and traders.

But a reasonable question to ask is: If more than three-quarters have to work, why shouldn't everyone work for a living? And why should the right of the three-quarters to have a job depend on the decision of the rich one-tenth that own the places of employment? Why, in fact, should the means of producing the very things necessary to living: wheat, milk, butter, cotton, wool, cloth, iron and steel, bricks and mortar, belong to a mere handful of the population of the country?

In Russia they don't.

As in the case of land, all factories, mines, railways and shops are public property in the Soviet Union. This means that there can be no such thing as a campaign for "Fair Play for the Railways"—meaning, not the railwaymen or even the passengers, but the railway shareholders. There are no "coal-owners" drawing profits or closing down pits because they are unprofitable—and, of course, there are no royalty owners. And there are no armament manufacturers, finding that war pays while peace would mean a disastrous slump.

Instead of this, the whole of the industry and trade of the country is planned. The aim of the plan is to use every factory to the full, to enrol the services of every able-bodied citizen for the purpose of increasing production as rapidly as possible.

And when production rises this does not mean "over-production" and unemployment, it does not mean excessive stocks of goods so that oranges have to be thrown into the sea or grain used for locomotive fuel, or inventions bought up by great private firms to ensure that their competitors shall not use them though they have no intention of using

them themselves. On the contrary, as production is increased so the flow of goods on to the market is increased and prices are lowered accordingly. At the same time, as workers raise their output their wages rise. As a result, the U.S.S.R. is the one country in the world where as a result of the public ownership of the means of production, and the planning which is possible as a result, there is no unemployment, production is steadily rising and prices fall while wages rise.

Some idea of the developments in the Soviet Union as a result of this planned production is given by the figures quoted in Section 18.

The idea of planning appears somewhat strange in a country where every business is its own master, and where each business thrives by cutting the throats of its competitors. But in Soviet conditions the principle of planning is simple enough: For Five-Year periods a plan is drawn up of the steadily growing needs of the country—consumers' goods, new factories and mines, social services and defence. At the same time the existing resources are calculated, together with the number of able-bodied working people available. The Plan is then drawn up to cover the whole industrial life of the country just as, in our own country, every year's Budget is a plan for expenditure on the armed forces, education, health and so on. Thus the whole of the U.S.S.R. is run, as it were, as "one business," but aiming not at private profits but at satisfying the growing needs of the people.

At the top, the State Planning Commission is responsible for working out the general plans for five-year periods and for each year separately. Each Soviet Republic, each town and village, each factory and farm also has its own Plan for the five-year period, and for each year. Naturally, from year to year adjustments have to be made; just as, in our own country's Budget, the figure never works out exactly as the Chancellor of the Exchequer foresees in his Budget speech! The Plan is therefore not rigid: it lays down certain main lines of development, but the details are modified from year to year.

This system of planning, only possible when the whole of the land and the industry of a country are under public control, leads to a rising standard of life for the people. It exists only in the U.S.S.R. It is possible only in a Socialist country.

4. The Workers Are On Top

MANY good people in Great Britain when they hear mention of Socialism or "State control" suffer cold shudders. They think of a mechanical system, something like a universal police force, with every individual placed like a cog in the machine, unable to enjoy a little extra elbow room in any direction.

Yet the question that matters, from the point of view of the country's breadwinners that have to work for a living, is this: What kind of boss can provide everybody with the best possible conditions of work?

In the Soviet Union the boss is always a public authority. It may be a State Trust, administered from Moscow and controlling enterprises in every part of the Soviet Union; or, at the other extreme, it may be a town soviet or council, which has its own tramways, factories and shops.

The important difference between Russia and Britain in this respect is simply that the Soviet factories are not run for private profit. The Soviet State runs its industry with a view to increasing production, in order further to raise the "standard of life". But it also recognizes that the "standard of life" includes the working conditions of the people. Therefore, from the time of the Revolution, great attention has been paid in the Soviet Union to the workers' conditions.

There is only one country in the world to-day, the Soviet Union, where the working people have a working day strictly limited to eight hours at the most, and in a number of jobs, enjoy a working day of seven, or even six hours. The six-hour day exists for jobs considered dangerous; particularly in mining, the metal industry, chemical works and so forth.

There is also only one country in the world to-day where every wage-earner, man or woman, enjoys at least two weeks holiday on full pay every year, and has done so since 1917. This country is the Soviet Union.

The U.S.S.R. is also the only country in the world where the workers in the factories have the right by law, through their trade unions, to carry out the work of factory inspection.

In 1919 the British Government published a White Paper containing documents about the Russian Revolution. One writer expressed herself horrified at the nationalisation of the factories: "In July all factories were nationalised and handed over to the workmen under the direction of Central Boards which functioned in a most despotic manner. All owners and managers were turned out and could not re-enter the works unless elected."

In fact democracy had been introduced in the factories. How many workers would object in this country if no

manager could enter the factory again unless elected by the workers?

And to-day, in the territories newly added to the Soviet Union since September 1939, owners have been turned out, and managers have only been allowed to carry on subject to the approval of the workers.

At the present time, in Soviet industry, the trade unions do not elect the managers, but it is they which recommend their best members as suitable for promotion. It is almost impossible to find a Soviet factory to-day which is not managed by one of the workers who has been promoted on the recommendation of the trade union.

Since the Soviet factories are public enterprises and the care of the working people is the main responsibility of the Soviet public authorities, the amenities for the working people in Soviet industrial enterprises are enormous. Every Soviet factory has its own dining-rooms where meals are available at cost price (no profit being made by the concern); it has its own nursery-school and kindergarten for the children of women workers; and, in the case of an enterprise of any size, it has its own clinic, including dental department, on the spot. At the same time, no Soviet industrial enterprise is without a club for the workers, where sports facilities are also available.

Every Soviet organization is obliged by law to provide leisure, accommodation and adequate rest rooms for its workers. This even applies on board ship, where the "Red Corner"—the rest room for the ship's crew—is a feature which always catches the eye of anybody who knows the ships of other countries.

As a result of this, the factory is not only a place where eight hours of work must be done for six days in seven; it is also a social centre with its club, sports facilities and dining-rooms available for the use of the workpeople.

And since 1917 the trade union has had, by law, to be given a room on the factory premises, and has the right to hold meetings inside the factory. As a result of this there are less meetings held outside the gates of factories than there are in this country; but meetings inside the factory are a regular feature of Soviet life, whereas in Britain such a thing happens but rarely, and usually only in cases where the workers are so well organized that they can in some ways acquire the upper hand.

In Britain, more than three quarters of the people are working for somebody else, in somebody else's concern. Even in the so-called "public services", such as the London Passenger Transport Board, for example, the busmen and tramwaymen, underground workers and trolley-busmen are working for "the Board," that is, for the shareholders, not for themselves.

Contrast the Soviet Union with this. One of the things which mostly strikes foreigners visiting the U.S.S.R. is the

fact that the workers always speak of "our factory", "our underground", "our coal mines". And this is not due to an illusion: it is a fact. Every Russian worker knows that the coal mines, factories and transport system belong to him; that it is he who elects the public authorities from the central government down to his local Soviet, and it is these elected authorities which control the whole industry of the country.

The Soviet worker knows that, during his eight hours of work, he is not building up handsome profits for strangers, but is increasing production which, in due course, becomes an increase in supplies of goods for the people. He knows that the industry of the country is his, not the property of somebody else. He knows that this public ownership has brought him security in his job, adequate leisure, and a rising standard of life. In short, he lives under conditions where he, as a worker, literally is "on top of the world."

5. The Importance of Trade Unions

EVERY trade unionist knows that under the system existing in Britain the main function of his union is to protect him from excessive exploitation by his employer.

He also knows that the key to any dispute is the resort or the threat to strike. He knows also that, in the history of strikes, there has never been a case where the police were used by the government against the employers, though there are plenty of cases in which the police have been used by the government on the side of the employers. He knows that not only the police, but the military, have been used by governments against the workers during a strike.

In the Soviet Union the position is entirely different. From the time when the Soviet State was set up in 1917, a new situation existed for the trade unions. For the first time in history the trade unions found that they had a government they could trust to back them in their disputes with the employers. Now, when a strike took place, the state and police supported the workers against the employers. And if the employers refused to operate the factories, their factories were taken over by the state or local authorities.

From 1917 onwards the Soviet state and the trade unions worked hand in hand against the employers until, by 1928, there were no employers left and every industry and trade of the country was being run as a public enterprise.

This however did not mean a falling off in the power of the trade unions. In 1917 the Soviet government passed a law on workers' control by which, in every enterprise, an elected committee of the workers had the right to exercise control

over the management. Later, this power was given to the trade union committee on the job, and the Unions, in the interests of efficiency, organized themselves on a completely industrial basis so that the workers in each enterprise belonged to the same union. In 1917 there were one and a half million trade unionists in Russia. By 1937 there were over 22 million, more than 84 per cent. of the wage-earners of the country. Today there are well over 25 million!

To this day the trade union committee in the Soviet factory exercises control over the running of the factory. As a rule, once a month, a "production meeting" is held at which the workers discuss the problems which arise in their daily work. In such meetings nobody is spared criticism, the manager can be criticized by those working under him, just as the rank-and-file worker can be criticized by the manager.

Every trade union committee has its own newspaper. In a large enterprise it is printed; in a small enterprise, or in the separate workshop, it takes the form of the "wall newspaper," like a notice-board hung on the wall, with articles and drawings contributed by the workers on the job. Here is an open forum, in which nobody is above criticism!

Wages, according to Soviet law, must be fixed by agreement with the trade unions. At least once a year, in every Soviet enterprise, a new collective agreement is signed between the employing organization and the trade union. This agreement fixes the rate of pay for every job, and in the drawing-up of the agreement there is a general discussion in which every worker can take part. As a result of this anomalies in existing wage rates are continually exposed and eliminated.

Factory inspection is now entirely in the hands of the unions, since it was found that an elected trade union official was far better equipped to ensure that the factory laws were enforced than a visiting state official.

The training of workers to qualify for more skilled jobs is a function of the trade unions which has become of particular importance since the abolition of unemployment. By 1930 unemployment had been literally wiped out as a result of the First Five Year Plan. The government therefore abolished unemployment insurance, and handed over the insurance funds to the trade unions, to be used for training unskilled workers to become skilled craftsmen. To-day, in every Soviet enterprise, the workers obtain free training for more skilled jobs. The training is organized by the unions, but is paid for out of public funds.

In every Soviet enterprise the trade union supervises the social services which are provided for the workers. The restaurant, the nursery school and kindergarten, the clinic, the club and the sports facilities are supervised by elected delegates of the union. Thus, in controlling all such social amenities it is the workers who have the last word through their union; and there is none of that patronage which in

an enlightened British factory goes with the provision of such services by a management which, as a rule, has no affection for trade unionism and no intention of letting the trade union control the services available to the work-people.

To working people in a country like Britain, one of the most important functions of the trade unions is to organize strikes. This is natural under conditions where the working people on every job can, as a result of a successful strike, raise their standard of life at the expense of the employers' profits.

In Russia, so long as there were private employers there were strikes. And the Soviet State helped the trade unions to win these strikes, instead of helping the employers to defeat the strikers, which is the usual policy of governments outside the U.S.S.R.

But by 1928 there were no more employers to strike against. The industry of the country was now publicly owned and controlled. Production was being planned so that all goods produced were conveyed as rapidly as possible to the consumer. As a result, a strike under these conditions could only hold up production, and this would hold up the flow of goods to the consumers—to the working people themselves. Such strikes could now only be aimed at forcing the public authorities to pay higher wages to the section of workers on strike, raising their wages relatively to those of other public employees.

Under such conditions it clearly was not in the general interest of the workers as a whole to encourage strikes. And as a result of a thorough discussion in the trade unions, it was clearly realized that, under Socialism, with all the factories run in the public interest, it was now necessary for trade unions to play their part in increasing production as the only way of further raising living standards all round.

For this reason, "socialist competition"—competition between groups of workers to increase output, and "Stakhanovism"—the introduction of more efficient methods by rank and file workers on the job are encouraged by the Soviet trade unions. Every Soviet worker knows that if he increases his output per eight-hour shift this will mean: More wages for himself, more products on the market and lower prices all round. He also knows that it will not mean that anyone is put out of work, or that surplus stocks will lead to a slump in the industry. Therefore Soviet trade unionists are interested in increasing production.

To sum up the position of the trade unions in the U.S.S.R. to-day, we may say this: They take part in running the factories, in fixing wages, in providing social services, and in organizing cultural, sport, holiday and educational facilities for their members. They do all those things which we could imagine our own British trade unions doing if we had a government which encouraged the development of trade

unionism, and which had put an end to the control of industry by the representatives of private shareholders.

There is one further function of the Soviet trade unions which deserves special consideration: They have entire charge of the administration of Social Insurance.

6. Security For All

ABOVE all things, working people all over the world want security. They want a secure job and, if ill or too old to work, they want the means of living during the time when they are unable to work. The Soviet State has set out to give to its people this security, and the trade unions play an active part in administering the Social Insurance system.

As far as unemployment is concerned, we have already seen that from 1930 onwards unemployment was abolished. Prior to that the Soviet worker had received unemployment benefit and his housing accommodation free of charge during the period of unemployment. With the success of planning, a labour shortage replaced unemployment, and to this day in the Soviet Union every working man and woman knows of alternative jobs which they could have for the asking.

Thus, while Arthur Greenwood has told the British people that they may expect many millions of unemployed after this war, in the U.S.S.R.—in peace time—unemployment has for years now been a horror of the past.

But what of that insecurity arising from sickness, accidents, old age or, in the case of women workers, an addition to the family? All these interruptions of work are catered for by the Social Insurance system of the U.S.S.R. And while the funds for Social Insurance come entirely from the employing organizations, without any deduction from the workers' wages, the administration of Social Insurance is in the hands of the trade unions. Experience has shown that, even in a Socialist State, elected trade union officials are more likely to cater with consideration for the needs of the individual working man or woman than a state official bearing no direct responsibility to the individuals for whom he caters.

Sickness benefit is paid to trade union members at the rate of half to full wages, according to the period that they have been in their jobs. To non-unionists, not more than 15 per cent. of the total number of wage-earners, the rate of benefit is fixed at half the rate for trade union members. Therefore, while trade union membership is voluntary, there is a definite incentive, from the standpoint of social insurance alone, to be a trade union member. Those who are not in

the unions are usually the very newest recruits to industry, or, in certain cases, individuals expelled from the union for some serious offence.

Benefits for disablement, also allowances to dependants in case of the death of a worker, vary to some extent from industry to industry. The trade unions in each industry have their own particular rates of benefit, the main question, of course, being the length of service of the individual concerned, and the need of his or her dependants. Disablement pensions are from 33 per cent. of wages upwards; while dependants' allowances on the death of a worker vary from 25 to 100 per cent. according to the circumstances of the case.

Old age pensions are available in the Soviet Union to men at 60 and to women at 55. The basic rate is 50 or 60 per cent. of earnings at the time of retirement, if the man has a working life of 25 years or the woman of 20 years. In cases of a lower working life, the pension is lower. In cases where workers continue to work after they reach pension age, they may receive part of their pension plus their wages; or, in some industries, they receive a bonus on their retirement pension for every extra year that they work. Naturally, in a country without unemployment and with an actual shortage of labour, working people are encouraged not to retire at the age of 60 or 55 if they are capable and have the desire to continue to work.

For working women special provisions are made—as will be seen later, in Section 9.

The Soviet Trade Unions, quite apart from the payment of insurance benefits to sick or disabled workers, or to expectant or young mothers, pay special attention to the personal welfare of their individual members. In every factory and workshop the "Social Insurance delegate" is not only charged with seeing that the right benefits are paid, but with calling on the sick worker, rendering any help that is required, and, where necessary, with arranging special financial assistance if this is required during a period of illness. As a result of this, the Soviet worker who is ill, or the woman worker who is bearing a child, has the personal attention of his or her union in their time of need.

There is frequently some misunderstanding in Britain regarding the security of the Soviet worker with regard to personal property. There are still people who seriously believe that personal possessions are prohibited. But the contrary is the case: Every Soviet citizen is secure in the possession of anything which he or she has purchased as a result of earnings from their work. Further, if they prefer to save rather than spend their earnings, they are free to do so by placing their savings in the State bank, or in State loans. This security in the possession of their earnings, or of goods purchased by their earnings, is guaranteed in the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.

7. Co-operation

THERE must be hardly a town in Britain where a substantial proportion of the working people are not members of a "Co-op." By shopping at the Co-op, they ensure that, instead of somebody else making a profit out of selling them goods, they themselves share out this profit, by co-operatively owning the shops as their own collective property.

In the Soviet Union, ever since the Revolution, great encouragement has been given to co-operation: not only co-operation among consumers, however, but among producers as well.

When the Soviet government was set up, one of the first things which it did was to encourage the working people to form co-operative societies in order to provide themselves with the supplies they needed, so that those who were trading for private profit should be squeezed out of business.

These Co-operative Societies were different from ours in that, right from the start, they never paid a dividend: They took the view that to supply cheaper goods to the consumer, and to provide various social and educational services free of charge was a better form of service than to charge the same or even higher prices than private firms, only to hand the money back later as a dividend.

In Britain every co-operator knows how, on matters where there is a conflict of interests between the co-operatives and private traders, the policy of the government is to favour the private trader. This, of course, is natural, so long as we have governments which represent the interests of those who live on profit.

In the Soviet republic the government pursued the opposite policy: It provided credits to the co-operative societies, while it placed higher taxation on the private traders. In this way, by 1928, co-operative trade had almost entirely driven private trade off the market, and it attained at one time an individual membership of 70,000,000.

From 1930 onwards the Soviet government, through the various State trusts, began itself to open shops in the towns, and also encouraged the local authorities to do so. By 1935 every town shop was either owned by the State, by the local authority, or by a co-operative. In the villages, on the other hand, the co-operatives were still the main form of trading organization, but were far from doing their job adequately. Therefore the Soviet government passed a law by which, in future, the co-operatives were to concentrate their business in the villages, while the state and local authorities

completely took over the organization of urban trade. The result was a considerable increase in efficiency all round.

To the town dweller it merely meant that he no longer owned the local shops as a member of a co-operative society, but he owned them as an elector of the local and central government authorities. It was not a reversion to private trading for profit, but a change from one form of social ownership to another, based on considerations of efficiency.

But consumers' co-operation is not as important in the Soviet Union as producers' co-operation, which is practically unknown in Britain.

In the Russian towns before the Revolution there were hundreds of small handicraftsmen—tailors, barbers, cobblers, watchmakers and so on. The Soviet government offered these people considerable assistance on one condition: That they pooled their resources, formed producers' co-operatives in their own particular craft, elected their own management, and shared out their earnings according to the work that each one put in. As a result there was a rapid growth of co-operatives of producers, called "artels" in Russian. When, in September, 1939, the Red Army brought the Soviet system to Western Byelorussia, the same procedure was adopted there. The result was that within nine months about 6,000 small handicraftsmen, who had been on the verge of ruin, were reorganized in 200 producers' co-operatives.

In the countryside also, where the greater part of agriculture was carried on by separate peasant households on tiny scattered strips of land, the Soviet government offered great privileges to those who pooled their land and implements, elected their own management, and cultivated the land co-operatively. These are the "collective farms" which now control practically the whole of the agricultural land of the U.S.S.R.

In each farm the management committee is elected by the members, who can recall any member who does not give satisfaction in his job. The work of the farms is organized by the management committee, and the work done by each member is carefully recorded. The unit of measurement is the "work-day," which is roughly based on a normal eight-hour day of unskilled work. In this way a good worker, or a skilled worker, may earn more than one "work-day" in a day's work.

The products of the farm, grain, fruit, vegetables, dairy produce, meat, poultry, are divided up as follows: First, debts must be met, taxes to the State, payments for goods purchased, and payment must be made to the State Machine and Tractor Stations for the use of agricultural machinery—a system by which a central supply of machinery serves many farms. Secondly, the necessary funds for seed, building, and other developments of the farm itself must be provided. Thirdly, a part is set aside

for social purposes, a club, bath house, perhaps a new kindergarten or clinic, and sickness and old age insurance for members. Finally, the rest is divided among the members according to the work-days to their credit.

The collective may sell part of its products for cash, in which case this cash is divided among the members. Or it may decide to share out the products, letting the members themselves sell for money any surplus they have. In every town of the U.S.S.R. there is a "collective farm market" where the peasants sell their surplus products. The prices, however, are ultimately controlled by the State, since nobody will buy in the market if the prices are much in excess of those being charged in the State shops for the same goods.

The result of collectivization has been an enormous increase in agricultural production. By making possible modern large-scale farming, it has put an end for ever to the menace of famine which perpetually stalked the countryside of Tsarist Russia.

Modern scientific methods are particularly encouraged, and the State assists the collectives to undertake their own experimental work. At the Agricultural Exhibition, which has been running in Moscow for two years, the best collective farmers from all over the U.S.S.R. have demonstrated their methods; delegates from the other collective farms attend the exhibition, report back on these advanced methods, and get them introduced in their own farms. Among recent exhibits has been a demonstration by women collective farmers in the Altai mountains of how they have obtained the largest wheat-yield per acre in the world, 151 bushels. They promised that within a year they would raise 157 bushels per acre from an eight acre plot.

Naturally, such things cannot happen in a world where, when harvests are large, farmers have to plough back their crops into the land to keep up prices. It can only happen in a Socialist country, where the State sees to it that steadily increasing production is of direct benefit to the farming people themselves.

8. Earnings and Savings

IT is surprising how many people in Britain to-day still have the idea that in the Soviet Union the working people do not receive money wages at all, but instead receive rations. Or who, realizing that money wages are paid, hold the belief that everybody gets the same wage, whatever the work, and however much work they may happen to do.

Actually, as we have seen, money wages are paid in the Soviet Union to the industrial workers and office employees, and the collective farmers share their products partly in goods and partly in money in accordance with the collective's own decision. While there is no attempt to establish equality of incomes, the principle laid down in the Soviet Union is that there should be equal pay for equal work, higher pay for harder or more skilled work, lower pay for the less hard or less skilled jobs, and no unearned income in the form of rents or profits. At the same time the government, in planning the distribution of labour as between one industry and another, uses the rate of wages as a means to attract workers where they are most needed. If, say, more workers are needed in mining this year as compared with textiles, then a raising of the wages of miners as compared with textile workers will attract more of the young people into that branch of industry. Or it may be the other way round, in which case it is the textile workers who get the rise. Obviously, short of forcing people to work in a job whether they like it or not, this is the only way, apart from propaganda, by which the Soviet government can attract people to the jobs where, at any time, they are most needed.

An important feature of this system is that there is no rigid relationship between the wages of different kinds of workers. At one time coal miners may be getting more than textile workers, or engineers than doctors. But later on, if the relative need for these different types of working people changes, then the State adjusts their wages accordingly.

Another important fact to note is that, while the wages of one group may be raised relatively to another, the Five-Year Plans provide for steadily increasing wages for all workers from year to year. Thus, all earnings are steadily rising, while there are at the same time considerable differences between the wages paid for different jobs. These wage-rates are all fixed of course, as has been pointed out, by the employing organizations jointly with the trade unions.

The minimum wage laid down by law in the U.S.S.R. is

110 roubles a month. The range of wages in any factory works out roughly as between this minimum, and a wage of 1,500 to 2,000 roubles a month for the most skilled engineers or manager; and in many Soviet enterprises the most skilled of the manual workers receive a considerably higher wage than those in managerial positions. This situation also exists in the collective farms, where the best rank-and-file collective farmers earn a considerably greater number of work-days than the officials.

While the scale of wages according to work done is relatively steep, the following facts must be taken into account: Rent varies according to income and never amounts to more than 10 per cent. of earnings; medical and most educational services are free of charge; and facilities for nursery-school or kindergarten are free of charge to the lower-paid workers while the more highly paid have to pay towards these services. Similarly, the sending of sick workers to sanatoria or rest homes is either free of charge or is charged for, according to the earnings and family position of the worker concerned. Finally, promotion and free training for more skilled jobs are available to all.

Some individuals can earn very much higher incomes. Workers in the cultural field, musicians, actors and writers, of whom there is a very serious shortage, may earn very large incomes indeed. Writers, for example, like other working people, are paid according to the work which they do. But the measure of a writer's work in all countries is the circulation of his writings. Now in the Soviet Union, where publishing has to satisfy a steadily growing demand for books by a population of 193,000,000 people, some writers, like Alexei Tolstoi, Sholokhov, and Avdeyenko receive very large incomes from their books. They have, of course, to pay a high income tax, which takes as much as 50 per cent. of all their earnings over a certain sum.

What can a Soviet citizen do with his or her earnings?

There is no interference whatever in the Soviet Union with what a person does with his or her earnings, but they must of course use their money in ways consistent with the law. In the Soviet Union the following ways of using one's money are illegal:

To purchase land is illegal, since all the land of the country is publicly owned. To set up in business and employ the labour of others for profit is illegal. Thus, a Soviet worker may build a house, but he may not turn it into either a boarding-house or a hotel! This also means that no Soviet citizen can become a newspaper proprietor like Rothermere or Beaverbrook because he has money. All newspapers, like all factories, are owned by public organizations and not by individuals or groups of individuals whose only asset is money. Since money cannot be used to obtain ownership of land, industry or the Press, or to employ labour for profit, the Soviet citizen can only do two things with his earnings: He

may spend them on consumers' goods, or he may save. Both these ways of using money are permitted in the U.S.S.R.

If a Soviet citizen saves, he may put his money in a stocking or bury it. But the government prefers him not to do this, and therefore pays him 3 or 4 per cent. interest if he deposits it in the State savings bank or in a State loan. He then receives, in addition to his actual wages, 3 or 4 per cent. interest on his savings out of these wages.

Those who are worried whether a Soviet citizen might not start living entirely on interest should do this little sum. Imagine anybody saving out of their earnings, and receiving 4 per cent. interest on these savings. Can you imagine anybody in such conditions choosing to live simply on the interest from savings bringing an income equal to only a tiny fraction of what is earned from work? In addition, the law of the U.S.S.R. lays it down that people must work for a living.

Inheritance in the Soviet Union is permitted within very narrow family limits. A person who dies may hand on his or her personal property, subject to a very low rate of taxation, to children or parents. To brothers or sisters property may be left subject to a 50 per cent. tax. Outside this range the whole property goes to the State.

Since the typical family in the U.S.S.R. is still the peasant household, this form of inheritance safeguards the rights of parents or children dependent on a breadwinner. They continue to occupy the house and own the family possessions even if the chief breadwinner dies. But when relations are more remote than this, they are not allowed to inherit. The "fortune inherited from an aunt in Australia" cannot exist in the U.S.S.R.

9. Woman is Man's Equal

THE demand for equal rights for women has played an important part in the development of every democratic country. But real equality has nowhere been achieved outside the Soviet Union.

"A woman's place is in the home" is an old English saying. "Church, kitchen, children," is a phrase used in the Third Reich to express the status of women under Nazi rule. "A hen is not a bird and a woman is not a human being" is an old Russian peasant proverb. The Soviet Government has set out to smash all these old ideas of the inferiority of women.

From 1917 onwards the Soviet Government proclaimed the complete equality of the sexes, not only in politics, but in the economic life of the country as well. It was laid down

by law that women should be paid the same wages as men for similar work, and should have the same opportunities for promotion.

It would be wrong to suggest that this was at first welcomed by all the male citizens of the U.S.S.R. In many factories there remained for some time a prejudice on the part of the male workers against working under a woman. There remained the idea that many jobs were not women's work. And in the Asiatic parts of the Soviet Union, where women had been forced to wear the veil and remain out of sight of any man but their husband, the Soviet law on sex equality met with serious opposition. Many women in these Eastern territories lost their lives for heroically blazing the trail of sex equality with the full support and encouragement of the Soviet government. Assassinations of progressive women have taken place in these areas; though, to-day, the idea of sex equality has penetrated to every part of Soviet territory.

And it is the women themselves who, in many cases, have taken the initiative in forcing their recognition as equals. For example, when the first line of the Moscow Underground was being built, the trade union, for considerations of health, refused to allow women workers to undertake the tunnelling work which was being done in six-hour shifts (and four-hour shifts for compressed air work). A group of lusty young women formed a group and demanded the right to do this job. They then challenged the men to Socialist competition, and succeeded in acquitting themselves successfully. Again, in the railway industry, where the promotion of women has lagged to some extent, a group of women gave a lead by training as locomotive drivers, calling on other women to follow their example. A woman is now the manager of the Moscow Circular Railway.

At a time when hundreds of thousands of women are being drawn into war-time industry in this country the question of wages is a vital issue. Every trade unionist knows how, with women receiving lower wages than men, there is a constant menace to men's jobs and wages when women start to be employed in considerable numbers. If, however, there were real "equal pay for equal work," no such problem would arise.

The Soviet Union established such equal pay for equal work as long ago as 1917.

However much the equality of the sexes may be established by law, this does not get over the fact that women perform certain functions which men cannot perform. It is the women who must be the mothers of the next generation, and since they fulfil this special function, the Soviet government has always accorded to them special rights.

A working woman in the Soviet Union, if she is going to have a child, has the right to be put on to light work at any time on doctor's orders, and her wage remains as before,

however unskilled her new job may be. In addition to this, every working woman receives full pay for two months off work, one before and one month after the child is born. This means that at a time when an English working woman is often doing more work than normal, in order to get just that little bit of extra money needed to carry her over the crisis, the Soviet working woman can give all her attention to making the preparations for the new member of the family.

Since the Soviet government does not hold with the idea that a woman's place is only in the home, it assists working women to combine the two functions of mother and worker. The nursery-school and kindergarten are features of every large Soviet enterprise, while local nursery-schools and kindergartens, or ones attached to blocks of flats, cater for those working in the smaller concerns.

An example of the nursery-school services available in a large enterprise is the Red Titan Rubber Factory, employing about 7,000 women. This factory has five nurseries catering for 530 children, and kindergarten accommodation for another 600. Taking the U.S.S.R. as a whole, there are over 800,000 children daily cared for in nursery schools in the towns at the present time, not to mention the development of both permanent and temporary creches in the villages, the latter being organized during the busy seasons, particularly at harvest time.

For mothers of large families, special allowances are paid by the State. Every mother of seven or more children receives such an allowance, and nearly half a million women are receiving such allowances to-day.

No encouragement is given in the Soviet Union to the separation of parents and children. On the contrary, it is insisted that normal relations with parents is a desirable factor in the upbringing of every child. But this is no reason why a working woman should not be provided from 8 to 10 hours a day with the care of good nurses for her children; a luxury which the well-to-do in Britain provide for themselves for 23 hours out of 24, and which makes them feel that "family life" is a really magnificent institution, while Bolshevism breaks up the home!

The Soviet law on marriage, also, is based on the desire to ensure really effective sex equality. Marriages are registered at the cost of 3 roubles. Since Soviet law does not force people to live together if they no longer care for one another —while it also does not encourage laxity in marital relations —divorces are granted at the request of either party to a marriage, in the presence of the other party, on the payment of 50 roubles for a first divorce, 150 roubles for a second divorce, 300 roubles for a third! This sliding scale has been instituted with a view to providing a deterrent to casual marriage and divorce. With regard to children,

whether born of a registered marriage or not, both parents are bound to share the cost of upbringing. Usually the mother takes the custody of the child or children, and in such cases the father must pay 25 per cent. of his wages to the mother for one child, 33½ per cent. for two children, and 50 per cent. towards the upbringing of three or more children if the parents separate. As far as the children are concerned, all are equal in Soviet law and there is no illegitimacy.

The abolition of illegitimacy and the provision of work for all, together with the payment of equal wages for similar work for women and men, have all had the effect of more or less completely abolishing prostitution in the U.S.S.R. From 50,000 prostitutes in Moscow before the Revolution, only a couple of hundred are on the records to-day. And when the Red Army recently entered the city of Lvov in September, 1939, one of the first acts of the new Soviet authorities was to close down five brothels, officially licensed under the late Polish government. Honest employment was found for the women concerned.

In political life, just as in industrial and family life, Soviet women have absolutely equal rights with men. In the Soviet Parliament there are 189 women members, which gives it the largest membership of women of any parliament in the world, though, even in the U.S.S.R., women have still not yet gained equal numbers with men in the most responsible positions. The important thing, however, is that the representation of women in the higher government positions is steadily rising.

In certain professions, carried on mainly by men in this country, women are already in the majority. There are now in the Soviet Union more women doctors, dentists and teachers, than men.

In the villages, where the peasant women always had to bear a heavy burden of outdoor work in addition to their domestic responsibilities, the change in woman's status is possibly even more important than in the towns. Here, in the collective farms, the positions of chairmen and managers are already occupied on a vast scale by peasant women who, before the Revolution, never had any say at all in village administration.

In the sphere of education, where equal opportunity is provided for all, the figures of the 1939 census show interesting results. The number of women over 40 with a university education, that is, who were aged 18 or over at the time of the Revolution, is only one-third of the number of men between these ages with such education. But among the under-thirties there are 123,479 women to 169,774 men. The ratio has risen from 10 women to 30 men to 10 women to 14 men. These figures show that the proportion of women to men is steadily rising as the age group falls. This

means that among the younger generation equality of opportunity is becoming more and more of a reality so that, as a result of the better educational opportunities, a steadily increasing number of women are qualified to fill the most skilled jobs and the highest posts of responsibility.

10. Care of the Children

WE have already seen that in the Soviet Union there is a network of nursery-schools and kindergartens far exceeding anything in any other country. We shall also see, in the next section, that education is developing in the U.S.S.R. more rapidly than elsewhere and that it has already surpassed Britain in a number of respects. But further details are necessary to complete the picture of the very great attention paid to the welfare of children in the Soviet Union.

It is regarded as essential in the U.S.S.R. that children should have an opportunity for interesting hobbies in their spare time, that they should have a community life of their own, apart from the home and the actual hours of study in school, and that they should be able to regard the school as a place for enjoyment as well as work. All children start life equal, all go to the same type of school, whatever their family surroundings may be.

There is an organization for Soviet children which, in certain respects, can be compared with the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in Britain. There are, however, certain differences based on the special features of Soviet society. This organization, known as the Young Pioneers and with over 6,000,000 members, has a mixed membership of boys and girls, and the sexes are not segregated as in Scouts and Guides. In this way the children learn to associate as equals from the earliest age. Secondly, the teaching of the Pioneer organization is based on the ideas of international working-class brotherhood, and this internationalism shows itself in the completely equal treatment accorded to all children, whatever their race or colour may be. Thirdly, the Young Pioneers are thoroughly aware that they live in a Socialist country, brought into existence by a Revolution led by the working-class movement.

The pioneer organizations play a leading part in running the summer camps which cater for several million town children every year, and which are paid for out of public funds. In all the large towns there are now Pioneer Palaces at which children may spend their time, with all the necessary equipment and instruction for any hobby which they may care for. This includes equipment for technical hob-

bles such as wireless or railway engineering; for scientific hobbies; for literature, drama, dancing; and for games. Expert professionals give lectures to the children. It is not surprising that, with such encouragement, the U.S.S.R. has a very high record of child inventions, and that at the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow a special section is devoted to the achievements of children in the scientific work which they have carried out in their spare time. At present the Pioneer Palaces have not yet accommodation for all the children in the locality. They therefore give preference to those who are doing best at school, and to those who are considered to be "difficult" children who need special attention in order that their development may become normal. In addition, however, these Pioneer Palaces are now opening up branch clubs in the localities of the big towns, so that from year to year more and more children are being catered for.

The Soviet Union is the only country where there exists a network of special children's cinemas and theatres. In Moscow there are several children's theatres which, all the year round, present plays exclusively for the children of Moscow. Every school organizes excursions to see the plays at the children's theatres. The plays at these theatres are specially written to appeal to children. They include adaptations from the classics of different countries, and also such topics as exploration and working-class history. At the same time as there are special children's theatres there is a section of the film industry also catering for children. One film which has been shown on quite a considerable scale in Britain, "Lone White Sail," is one of the productions of the children's section of the film industry.

A problem which has had to be faced in the Soviet Union (and will have to be faced here as more women go into industry), has been the amusement of children after school in cases where both their parents are working. A few years ago an experiment was started in the city of Kiev which has now spread to most towns of the U.S.S.R.: "Pioneer Posts" were organized in a number of blocks of flats. These were club-rooms for the children living in the block so that, after school, if nobody was at home, they could enjoy the company of others and play games in a place where an adult was regularly in attendance. This system of providing a play-room for the children proved so successful that it has now been adopted in most Soviet towns.

Considerable municipal and trade union funds are devoted to the care and entertainment of children. Every trade union organization uses a substantial part of its funds for giving assistance to those workers who have large families. At the same time, a number of municipalities have provided special parks for children which surpass by far anything in the way of children's playgrounds which we have in this country. The latest development on these lines is the build-

ing of children's railways: In Moscow, Kïev, and a number of other cities there now exist children's model railways, run entirely by children, and covering distances of a quarter of a mile or more. The site is usually one of the largest parks of the city. And in the seaport of Odessa a children's port has been built, again specially equipped so that the whole work of the port can be operated by children. In this way, in their spare time, children can indulge in those technical hobbies which may, in later years, lead them to be eminent specialists in one or another profession.

11. Education and Health

ONE of the first declarations by the newly-formed Soviet government in Russia in 1917 dealt with education. At that time, eight out of ten adults in Russia were not able to read or write, so poor had been the educational system under Tsarism. The Decree on Education declared as follows: "Every genuinely democratic power must, in the domain of education, in a country where illiteracy and ignorance reign supreme, make its first aim the struggle against this darkness. It must acquire in the shortest time universal literacy, by organizing a network of schools answering to the demands of modern teaching science; it must introduce universal, obligatory and free education for all. . . . But a real democracy cannot stop at mere literacy, at universal elementary instruction. It must endeavour to organize a uniform secular school of several grades. The ideal is equal, and if possible higher education for all citizens. So long as this idea has not been realized for all, the natural transition through all the schooling grades up to the university—a transition to a higher stage—must depend entirely upon the pupil's aptitude, and not upon the resources of his family."

To what extent, in the twenty-three years since the adoption of this decree, have its aims been achieved? Some idea may be obtained from the fact that, in the U.S.S.R. to-day, over 33,000,000 children go daily to school, as compared with only 8,000,000 before the Revolution. The number of school children has been quadrupled. At the same time the number of university students has risen from 112,000 to 600,000, that is, increased by over five times. In the Soviet towns to-day education from 8 to 17 is practically universal. It is also free, except that, in the final two years, pupils falling below a certain standard pay a small fee.

In the villages the school-leaving age is steadily being raised from 13, with a view to achieving there also a universal secondary education for all within a few years. As

regards university education, this is available to all according to their ability. All students above a certain standard get free tuition and state maintenance. For the rest, a small fee is charged.

This, of course, puts education really within the reach of every able son or daughter of the working people.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the number of nursery-schools and kindergartens is steadily increasing; and that in every collective farm and factory there is an extensive system of adult education free of charge, the cost being borne out of public funds. The result is that the U.S.S.R. is already becoming the most educated country in the world as compared, twenty-two years ago, with a position similar to that of India or China. India, in the same period, has remained the same.

Let us now consider the development of another vital social service, the provision of good health to the population.

First, with regard to the prevention of disease, enormous practical work is being done throughout the U.S.S.R. Take as a single example the case of malaria, which rages in every country with hot summers where there are stretches of water in which the malaria-bearing mosquito can breed. In the U.S.S.R. hundreds of thousands of acres of marsh-land are being drained for the sole purpose of putting an end to this pest or are being sprayed from the air with poisons that prevent the breeding of this mosquito. At the same time, vast sums are being spent on research in combating other such diseases as cancer, tuberculosis, diphtheria and similar scourges. In the case of industrial diseases there is a special scientific research institute to study these diseases and work for their prevention. An interesting example of how this institute works was recently reported in the Soviet Press:

When a worker at a Moscow chemical factory suffered from a pain at his finger tips, and festering of the skin, he was sent to the Scientific Research Institute of Labour Hygiene and Occupational Diseases. Not only did they cure him, but as a result of his infection a special commission was set up to investigate the complaint, which was of an unusual nature. Regulations were shortly issued to all factories to ensure that such infection be prevented in the future.

But while great stress in the U.S.S.R. is laid upon prevention as better than cure, the work of curing disease must go on. The number of doctors in the U.S.S.R. to-day is 155,000, a greater number in proportion to population than we have in Britain! And medical services are provided free of charge to the whole people!

If a Soviet citizen is ill, then a visit to the local municipal or factory clinic procures all the necessary treatment free of charge. If, due to a temperature or lameness, it is not

possible to go out, then a visiting doctor calls from the clinic. When workers are off work through illness they receive the proportion of their wages described earlier. If hospital treatment is required, this is also free of charge, the worker draws his money just the same when he comes out, and nobody is asked to make a donation to the funds of the hospital!

In the interests of the mothers and children of the country all maternity care is free of charge also. Every expectant mother receives free advice from the maternity clinic. In the towns of the U.S.S.R. practically every child is to-day born in a maternity home, and in the villages also the number of maternity homes is now being rapidly increased.

The result of the Soviet health policy is seen in the fact that between 1913 and 1936 the death rate fell from 30 to 17 per thousand. Recent developments have led to a further reduction.

According to figures recently made available, typhoid cases declined by 30 per cent. in 1939 as compared with 1938, and dysentery and haemo-colitis by 12.2 per cent. During 1939 about 18 million inoculations against typhoid, 20 million against dysentery, and 12 million against diphtheria were made. The figures for children's diseases for 1940 show that in the first quarter of the year there was a 41.9 per cent. reduction in scarlet fever cases, and a 46.5 per cent. reduction in the incidence of measles as compared with the same period in the year before. Latest census figures show that the excess of births over deaths in the U.S.S.R. is the highest in the world—a true index of health. The Soviet figure is 115.7 per cent., the British is 24.6 per cent.

These figures show that, as a result of the steady extension of the health services, a very rapid reduction in the incidence of disease is taking place.

12. Leisure

WORKING an eight-hour day, never more, and with two weeks paid holiday a year at least, with public holidays in addition on May 1 and 2, November 7 and 8 (anniversary of the Revolution), on the anniversary of the death of Lenin and on Constitution Day, the Soviet people have more leisure than the working people of any other country.

What facilities are available for spending this leisure?

Attached to every large factory is a club. At this club there is provision for all the most popular hobbies: photography and sport, amateur dramatics and singing and

dancing, together with rooms for educational classes, discussions, and a theatre and cinema combined. In such clubs there are frequent performances of plays and concerts, the performers coming from the best theatres. Films are frequently shown, and lectures on a large variety of topics are also given.

In Tsarist Russia there were no popular sports clubs at all, since the authorities frowned severely on any sports organization for the working people, so afraid were they that, if the people came together for sport, they might also come together for other purposes of less advantage to their employers and to the government!

In recent years, however, with the energetic encouragement of sport by the State, which spends large sums every year to assist the sports clubs to extend their activities, sport has become of great importance. Not only does the U.S.S.R. hold a steadily increasing number of world records, its weight-lifters and swimmers and aviators in particular having carried off a great many international honours to date; but every effort is made to ensure that sport shall not become the preserve of professionals. In fact, the only professional job in sport in the U.S.S.R. is that of the instructor to a Sports Club. Everyone who wishes to become a full-time professional must pass through one of the many Institutes of Physical Culture, thus obtaining an all-round higher education. Only after this can he or she obtain employment at a sports club as an instructor. Professional teams are unknown; all sports teams in the U.S.S.R. are formed of amateurs.

In order to discourage individual development along one narrow channel, the Soviet sports organizations encourage their members to win the "Ready for Labour and Defence Badge." By last year 7,000,000 Soviet citizens already held this badge. To win the badge it is necessary to pass a series of tests. The tests, for those who are between 17 and 30 years of age, demand the following accomplishments (the metre distances have been approximately translated into yards): To run 100 yards in 12½ seconds and 1,000 yards in 3 minutes 3 seconds; to do a long jump of 5 yards and a high of 4 feet; to dive from 10 feet and swim 100 yards in 2 minutes 8 seconds; to walk 15 miles in 5 hours and cycle 61 miles in half an hour. These are only a few of the tests which have all been passed by over 7,000,000 Soviet citizens.

Thus, quite apart from team sports, which are to-day extending to the villages as well as the towns, these tests of individual accomplishment ensure a continuous striving for physical fitness such as goes to make an A1 nation.

The enjoyment of good theatres, literature and music is also very quickly extending in the Soviet Union at the present time. Russian films have already won a reputation all over the world; and the Russian theatre always has enjoyed a great reputation. But we must realize that to-day

even Soviet villages are building their own repertory theatres, that the works of Shakespeare and other classics are being translated into more and more languages of the U.S.S.R., and that the working people now really are able to attend the great central theatres and to see the greatest works of all ages. In the largest theatre of Moscow all the boxes are permanently reserved for the workers of the largest factories. Before 1917 they were reserved for the wealthiest families.

The reading of books as a spare time occupation has enormously developed as literacy has spread. In 1938 the number of libraries was six times and the number of books in them was 14 times the figures for 1914. After the Red Army entered Western Byelorussia in September, 1939, an interesting investigation was carried out. It was found that, in one small town, 2,500 people had been to the cinema, 10,000 had read newspapers and 400 had read books during the five years before the Red Army came. During the five days after the entry of the Red Army 18,000 people went to cinema performances, 22,000 took newspapers, and 2,000 books were taken out of one library alone!

There is certainly no country in the world where the workers in factory and office enjoy such facilities for excursions as in the U.S.S.R. Museums are crowded every holiday by excursions of workers from factories and offices. And the countryside in the neighbourhood of every industrial town is studded with bases where hikers may rest and have refreshment during a day's outing. Millions of working people make organized excursions into the countryside, where rambling has of recent years become a common enjoyment. Russia is also a country of great rivers. Boating expeditions are popular, and in the seaport cities such as Leningrad and Odessa yachting has become a working-man's hobby. The yacht clubs of to-day are attached to the factories!

With reading, cinema and theatre, sport, excursions, hobbies, the leisure of most people is fully occupied in any country. A word here might be included, however, on religion, for many people believe, quite incorrectly, that religious activities are not permitted in the Soviet Union.

Any person in the U.S.S.R. may use his or her spare time for religious worship if they wish. The only conditions laid down by law are these: Every religious organization must be self-supporting on the contributions of its actual adherents, no religious organization has the right to capture the minds of the young in the schools, and the State gives complete freedom for anti-religious propaganda as well as for religious worship. No one religious organization enjoys a privileged position as compared with others, as was the case with regard to the Orthodox Church in Tsarist Russia, or as is the case with the Church of England to-day. All

religious worshippers in the U.S.S.R., Christian, Jewish or Muslim, may worship freely, subject to the regulations mentioned above.

A word, in conclusion, must be said concerning holidays. In every health resort of the Soviet Union there are numerous holiday homes (rest homes) and sanatoria which are the property of state organizations and the trade unions. During 1940 more than 4 million working people spent their holidays in these rest homes. At the same time, several millions avail themselves annually of the services of the workers' tourist organization which is run by the trade unions. Apart from these, many millions of people prefer to make their own holiday arrangements.

With regard to expenditure on travel for holiday purposes, it is not unusual for the administration of a factory, or for the trade unions, to give financial assistance. In the case of accommodation in rest homes, the amount paid by the worker depends on his or her own family obligations, the trade union making up the cost out of the social insurance fund.

Since the setting-up of the Proletarian Tourists' Society just over a decade ago, an enormous increase in workers' holiday travel has taken place. The work of this organization has since been completely taken over by the trade unions. Among the enticing types of holiday provided for working people at moderate prices are the following: Trips by boat on the Volga and other rivers; hiking expeditions in the Caucasus, as well as serious mountaineering; trips by canoe and on foot in the wilds of the Altai mountains; visits to the Arctic territories of the U.S.S.R.

Since many such holidays cannot be fitted into a couple of weeks, it has been the usual practice for workers to obtain permission to extend their holiday period at their own expense (that is, without pay), or to work on their free days during the year and to add these days on to their holiday. All workers on dangerous jobs, of course, receive a holiday of at least a month, so that for them it is not difficult to arrange for long-distance travelling at holiday time. But even on the basis of two weeks' paid holiday it would surprise any British worker to see the number of people from Leningrad and Moscow who make the three days' journey to the Black Sea coast in the summer.

13. Equality of Nations

AT a time when there is so much talk about the freedom of small nations we read a great deal about the persecution of the Jews in Germany, and of the Poles, Czechs and Austrians who have been brought within the Third Reich. We do not read so much about the position of the Indian people within the British Empire, though here are 360,000,000 people ruled from London under a system which is fundamentally no more democratic than the rule of Czechoslovakia from Berlin. And while in Nazi Germany anti-Semitism has reached its worst and most horrible forms, we cannot claim that Jews, Negroes or other coloured peoples can always be sure in Britain that exception may not be taken to their presence because of their race or colour.

There is one country, however, where it is a criminal offence to persecute anybody, or even to insult anybody, because of their race or nationality. It is laid down by law in the Soviet Union that people of all races and nationalities have completely equal rights within the territory of the Soviet Union; and this law is rigidly observed.

This is why Paul Robeson sent his son to school in Moscow. He felt that only here could his son go to school with white children without being made a victim in any way to the expression of colour prejudice.

But not only do all citizens in the Soviet Union enjoy equal rights—whatever their race or nationality—but each nationality has the right of self-government. There are over 40 nationalities mentioned in the Constitution of the U.S.S.R., and the census records 49 nationalities with over 20,000 people, from the Russians with 99 million altogether, to the Arabians and Assyrians with just about 20,000 each.

The U.S.S.R. is composed of 16 republics, covering the 16 most important national territories. Each of these republics is an equal member of the Union, and on the territory of each republic all Soviet citizens enjoy equal rights. This means that an Estonian, for example, may live in Estonia—where Estonian is taught in the schools, is the language of the newspapers, theatres and so on; or he may choose to live in some other part of the U.S.S.R.

A Jewish student from Warsaw who had fled to the territory occupied by the Red Army in September, 1939, wrote recently as follows to a friend in England: "No one ever even dreams of asking you whether you are a Jew or not. . . . Next year I intend to continue my medical studies, not in Lvov, but Kiev, Moscow or Leningrad, because I long to live in a big city again."

Before 1917 the policy of the Tsarist Russian government was to force the Russian language on all the peoples of the Russian Empire, whether they liked it or not. At the same time, particularly at periods of labour unrest, it deliberately encouraged anti-Semitism in order to distract the people from the economic struggle against landlord and employer.

To-day in the Soviet Union the policy of the government is to give to every nationality its own Press, schools and theatres, and to encourage it to build up its own culture, its own literature, and to govern itself in its own territory. At the same time, the world's best classics are being made available in more and more of the languages of the Union.

The result of this policy is a remarkable development of national culture. And this occurs not only in the older Soviet republics, but in the new territories recently added to the Soviet Union.

In Lvov, for example, before the Red Army entered the city, there was one Polish theatre, that was all. At the time of writing there are five theatres: one for opera; a Ukrainian, Polish and a Jewish theatre; and a variety theatre performing in Polish and Ukrainian. Or take the case of Lithuania where no newspaper enjoyed a circulation of more than 15,000 before the country joined the U.S.S.R. Within six weeks of joining the U.S.S.R. a new peasant paper the "Peasants' Adviser," already had a circulation of 185,000, while the soldiers' paper, "Soldiers' Truth," had a circulation of 35,000.

The establishment of completely equal rights for the people of all nationalities is an achievement which none of the world's Empires has ever accomplished. The oppression in the Third Reich is well enough publicized. The ruling of 360,000,000 Indians from a country of 45,000,000 people is less often pointed out to the British public. The Japanese treatment of the Chinese and the Italian treatment of the Abyssinians are well known. And in the U.S.A. the treatment of the Negroes is a world-wide scandal.

The effect of Soviet policy towards nationalities has been an enormous stimulus to progress, particularly in all those backward areas which were mere colonies under the Tsarist government. The rate of development of these former colonial areas has been far greater than the rate of progress in Russia itself. Take, for example, the case of literacy: In the Russian republic, 55 per cent. of the people were literate in 1926, and 82 per cent. are literate according to the latest census of 1939. But in the Tadjik republic the figure has risen from a mere 3.7 per cent. in 1926 to 71.7 per cent. in 1939. Or, if we take the actual educational achievements accomplished to date, the Georgian republic is considerably ahead of all the other Soviet republics, even including the Russian. In Georgia 113.4 per thousand of the population have had a secondary education, and 11.2 per thousand have

had a university education. This compares with the figures of 76.8 and 6.5 respectively in the Russian republic.

Not only in education, but in health services and industrial development, the smaller republics have advanced more rapidly, not less rapidly, than the old ruling country of Russia.

14. The System of Government

IN giving completely equal rights to all nationalities, the Soviets have devised a system of government in which all the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. are equal. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is a Union, at the time of writing, of 16 equal states.

The system of government in the U.S.S.R. combines centralization on all matters which cover the Union as a whole, with a high degree of national and local self-government at the same time.

All authorities in the Soviet State are elected by secret ballot. At the bottom of the scale is the local Soviet (or council) for town or village. This local Soviet consists of members elected by secret ballot by all people over 18. Above these basic local authorities are the regional, territorial, and republican Soviets, which are also elected by the people by secret ballot. There then comes the Supreme Soviet of each national republic and, finally, the supreme authority of the U.S.S.R. as a whole, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (frequently described as the "Soviet Parliament").

Every elected member of a Soviet is subject to recall if he does not fulfil the demands of his or her electors. Women may be elected as well as men. Young people, from the age of 18 upwards, may be elected, and at the last general election there were five members of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. under 21 years of age!

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. is a parliament representing 193,000,000 people. This parliament consists of two chambers, both of which are elected by secret ballot, unlike the British parliament, whose House of Lords is not elected at all! The two chambers are called the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

In the Soviet of the Union the members are elected from all over the U.S.S.R. on the basis of one member for every constituency of 300,000 people. The other chamber, the Soviet of Nationalities, is elected in such a way that from each of the 16 equal Republics of the Union there is an equal number of representatives. This means that in the large republics there are comparatively large constituencies, whereas in the smaller republics there are smaller con-

stituencies in order to provide the same number of members from each republic.

Within the Union Republics of the U.S.S.R. there are a whole series of national self-governing territories: national autonomous republics, national territories, national provinces. In the Soviet of Nationalities each of these national units has some representation, so that, out of 193,000,000 people, the Russian republic, with more than 100,000,000 inhabitants, has a comparatively small representation as against the Ukrainian, Georgian, Armenian, Uzbek, Tadzhik, Esthonian, Latvian, and all the other national republics.

No Soviet law can be passed without having been adopted in both chambers of the Supreme Soviet. And each chamber has equal rights in moving new laws. The result is that the Soviet Parliament gives a fair representation, not only to the people of the U.S.S.R. in proportion to population, but to the peoples as nations at the same time.

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and the Supreme Soviet of each of the national republics elect in turn two authorities: The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, which carries on the work of parliament between its sessions, all of its decisions having to be ratified by the Supreme Soviet when it meets, which is not less than twice a year. The other body which is elected by the Supreme Soviet is the Council of People's Commissars, which consists of the leaders of the different state departments corresponding to our own Ministries of Finance, Health, Education, Defence and so on; but, under Soviet conditions, they include such commissariats as heavy industry, light industry, home trade, which can only exist as State departments in a country where the State itself has taken over such economic activities from private enterprise.

Not only does the Supreme Soviet have its People's Commissars for such affairs as home trade and the various branches of industry, but the local soviets are also able to take part in economic life. In Britain, local authorities are not allowed to undertake any form of commercial enterprise or industry—other than a handful of "public services." The reason for this is simple: If local authorities undertook trading operations and started to supply such things as milk and bread, as well as water and electricity or gas, then hundreds of private dairies and bakeries, which could not compete with the municipal enterprises, would be forced out of business. But since all British governments hitherto have aimed at preserving such private enterprise, they have never encouraged the local authorities to undertake such commercial ventures.

The result of this is that in Britain, if a progressive local council wishes to trade without profit in bread or milk or other things which it could supply cheaply to its people, it is not permitted to do so. In the Soviet Union, a Socialist

country, where there are no longer private industry and trade, it is encouraged to do so.

The result is that both the central government and the local authorities in the Soviet Union are able to own industrial and trading concerns, to produce goods and to supply them to the people. And at no stage does anybody make a personal profit out of supplying these goods to those who need them.

Since the public authorities own the whole of the industry of the country, it follows that the working people are almost all employees of public organizations. The working man in the U.S.S.R. is working for the State or for his local authority—none of them are working for the profit of a private owner.

And because the authorities in the Soviet State are elected by the whole people, all of whom are working people, there is no conflict between the people as voters and the people as workers in public enterprises. They have the same aim in whatever capacity: To increase production, and to raise the standard of life all round.

One exception, however, should be mentioned:

According to Soviet law, while nobody may employ another for profit, it is permissible for an individual to work on his own, or for a peasant family to cultivate its own little plot of land. Such cases, including not more than about 8 per cent. of the population, do not strictly come within the statement concerning public employees. However, even this small minority is dwindling as they see that life in the collective farms, or work as public employees, is more prosperous.

15. Justice For All

AN essential function of any State is the administration of justice.

The Soviet system of justice is based on the idea that every man and woman should be encouraged to take part in preserving law and order. Therefore the courts are elected from the ranks of the working people. For minor offences, petty assault between neighbours in a block of flats, drunkenness, or some offence committed by a worker in a factory, it is frequently the practice to try such cases on the spot. The house committee of a block of flats elects a judge for a "comradely court" held in the presence of the other tenants; or the trade union committee in the factory organizes a "comradely court" at the factory to try the offender. In such "comradely courts" many petty cases are tried without ever coming into the ordinary courts of law

at all, and by such means the citizens gain experience in the common-sense settlement of disputes between their fellows.

The ordinary "magistrate's court" in the Soviet Union is the People's Court in town and country. The People's Court is presided over by one judge and two assistants. The judge sits regularly, the assistants are supposed to sit only at one session at a time. Any decision must be arrived at by a majority decision of the three. Thus, the legal knowledge of the judge and the practical human knowledge of the ordinary citizens are combined in passing judgment. The judge, and also the assistant judges, are elected in the Soviet Union by universal and secret ballot by the people in the area covered by the court.

In the higher courts of the Soviet Union the judges and their assistants are also elected, but in this case not by the whole population, but by the ruling Soviet for the area concerned. This is true right up to the Soviet Parliament of the U.S.S.R., which elects the members of the Supreme Court of the Soviet Union.

A word must be said about procedure in these courts. Any foreigner visiting a Soviet court is impressed by the informality of the procedure. No judges or lawyers in wigs and other forms of fancy dress. The court-room is an ordinary meeting-room, the judge and assistants sit at a table covered with red cloth, the procedure is informal, and prisoners argue with judges as citizens with one another.

Lenin on one occasion remarked that Soviet law must be so simple that every ordinary working man can understand it. It also must be so simple that ordinary working people can administer it, for the judges are elected from the ranks of the ordinary working people. This means that, unlike our British courts, where middle-class magistrates, judges and juries sit in the seat of judgment over an overwhelming majority of working-class offenders, in the Soviet courts there is no social barrier between judge and accused. In Britain a judge some time ago remarked, when a prisoner had referred to "dinner time," that that must have been about 7 p.m. The prisoner had to point out that the working man's dinner is at mid-day. Such a simple misunderstanding, based on class differences, is inconceivable in the Soviet courts.

The aim of the Soviet courts is to make good citizens. Therefore the punishment of criminals is not based on revenge—on sending them to gaol so that, when they come out, they find it infinitely harder to get a respectable job than they did before—but to train them to live a normal life as useful working citizens. Therefore, where imprisonment is inflicted, the treatment consists in providing regular work for the prisoner, so that, on finishing, he or she may qualify for honest employment. Prisoners are paid for their

work, though naturally at rates considerably lower than they would be earning in conditions of freedom. Solitary confinement is only used as an exceptional disciplinary measure against a prisoner who has offended against prison regulations: in general the prisoners freely associate with one another. Corporal punishment is prohibited as being barbaric.

For minor offences the courts can inflict fines, or the punishment known as "forced labour", which is a fine on the instalment system. The guilty citizen has to pay, for so many months, a certain proportion of his or her wages to the court. This system is accompanied by the sending of information to the offender's place of work, as a result of which it becomes a special obligation of the trade union to pay attention to this individual, to ensure that he or she becomes once again a law-abiding citizen.

In considering any offence in the Soviet Union two factors are always taken into account in addition to the actual offence itself: the social effect of the offence—an offence which conflicts with the interests of the community as a whole is treated more seriously than an offence of a purely personal character—and the motive and conditions behind the action. Thus, for example, when on one occasion a Moscow woman engineer, with one child, murdered her husband out of jealousy, the court found her guilty, but, recognizing the cause as being one of most extreme provocation, and recognizing also the good record of citizenship of the woman, sent her back to work, specially asking her union to assist her to adjust herself to normal citizenship. The court never had reason to regret its leniency in this case.

On the other hand, however, there are crimes which are subject to the death penalty in the Soviet Union. Acts of sabotage leading to loss of life, together with certain other crimes aimed deliberately at the weakening of the Soviet State, are still subject to the death penalty.

After a Revolution, after four years of fighting against foreign armies of intervention, after a quarter of a century struggling for security in a hostile world, the Soviet State still takes drastic measures against those who, in alliance with the property-owners of other countries, have dared to attempt to weaken the Soviet State with a view to abolishing Socialism. As a result, the U.S.S.R. can to-day claim to be the one country without a "Fifth Column." This war-time law of the Socialist State is likely to operate so long as the final conflict between the two systems of Socialism and capitalism remains unsettled. When Socialism is finally unchallenged and the measures necessary in a period when military conflict was always liable to break out will no longer be necessary, a legal system free from all measures of a military or emergency character will become universal.

16. The Workers' Party

THE party which is in power in the Soviet Union, and under whose leadership so much has been achieved, is the Communist Party, known in Russia before the Revolution as the "Bolsheviks," a word derived from *bolshinstvo*, meaning majority. The Bolsheviks were the majority group in the Russian Socialist party in 1903, when they came out under Lenin's leadership in favour of a revolutionary socialist policy.

In 1905, when the Russo-Japanese war had brought great sufferings to the working people, there was a wave of revolution throughout the country, and the Bolsheviks played a leading part in the activities of the workers and peasants. In 1917, disillusioned by the steadily growing suffering arising from the war, the working people of Russia began to organize their "soviets," local democratic committees of workers, peasants and soldiers. The Bolshevik Party put forward the policy of setting up a Soviet government and saving the Russian people from further slaughter. This policy was finally adopted in November, 1917, the Bolsheviks having won an overwhelming majority in the workers' and soldiers' soviets, the soviets of peasants later joining them in the creation of the Soviet State.

From that time onwards, the Bolshevik or Communist Party has played a leading part in the Soviet State. This State took the necessary measures to ensure that landlords, bankers and profiteers should never again achieve control of the country. This meant that all organizations of the employing class were disbanded.

At the same time, other political parties, besides the Communist Party, continued to function until, recognizing that they could never hope to achieve power again by democratic means, they resorted to armed rebellion, aligning themselves with the forces of foreign states which were overrunning the country. Then and then only were they made illegal.

The masses of the people, active in the soviets, already recognized that only the leadership of the Communist Party could bring them security and progress. Already, under the leadership of this party, the peasants had taken over the land, the workers were enjoying the eight-hour day and two weeks paid holiday a year, as well as generous social insurance. Women were receiving equal pay with men. People of all nationalities were being treated as equals for the first time. Free medical attention was being given to all citizens.

The result was that the Communist Party became recognized by the people as their leader in the cause of progress just as in Spain from 1936 to 1939 the People's Front won similar recognition from the masses of the people.

This led to the election of Communists to posts of respon-

sibility, not only in the State, but in the trade union and co-operative organizations. The Communists became the recognized leaders in all the democratic organizations of the people.

But such an acquisition of power might have dangerous results. Therefore, on Lenin's initiative, a system of "Party Cleansings" was organized by which, from time to time, all members of the Party had to defend in public their right to be members of the Communist Party.

The result of this was that those Communists who had not a record of good and conscientious work and of good comradeship with their fellow-workers, were expelled periodically from the Party. Though to-day this system of Cleansing has been abolished, it is essential that the Party, in order to retain its leadership of Soviet organizations, public opinion, and of the government, should be able to claim within its ranks the most respected citizens. Therefore it is the policy of the Party to expel from its midst those who do not come up to the highest standards of citizenship, and unite within its ranks those who do.

Membership of the Party is open to all citizens who support its programme, work in one of its groups, and regularly pay their dues to the Party funds. These dues are based on income, so that where members earn a comparatively high income a high proportion of this must be surrendered by them to the Party funds. Every member of the Party must, in addition to his or her ordinary work, carry out some work on behalf of the Party. Further, members of the Party may be sent on Party work to different parts of the country. They therefore must be loyal and disciplined workers. It is for this reason that millions of keen supporters of the Party still feel "not good enough" for Party membership.

The organization of the Communist Party is on strictly democratic lines, together with a centralized leadership. At periodical congresses general questions of policy are decided, and the Central Committee is elected. Between congresses the Central Committee is responsible for the leadership of the Party, and, between meetings of the Central Committee, its elected Political Bureau, which includes among its members Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov and others. The general procedure with regard to decisions in the Party is that there should be the broadest discussion of policy, but that, when a decision has been reached, all members are bound by that decision. This combines democratic discussion with disciplined operation.

The membership of the Communist Party is about 2½ millions in the Soviet Union, making it the largest political party in the world, with the exception of the Indian National Congress which has 6 million members. Numerical comparisons with the membership of the ruling party in other countries are liable to be confusing unless one fact is borne

in mind: To be a member of the Communist Party it is essential to be an active member. There is no mere "paying membership" such as we have in the Conservative, Liberal and Labour parties in this country. If we take the active membership of ruling political parties in other countries, we will find that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with one active member in every 68 citizens, shows the largest membership in proportion to population of any ruling party in the world to-day. This, of course, is natural, since the Communist Party claims to be a party truly representative of the masses of the people.

17. The Leaders

IT must often strike the British newspaper reader that very little information is made available concerning the leaders of the Soviet Government, men like Kalinin, the President, Stalin, the Prime Minister, Molotov, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Voroshilov, chief organizer of defence, and others.

Who are these men that stand at the head of the peoples of the Soviet Union to-day? To know something about them is to know something also about the nature of the Soviet government.

The President of the Soviet Union, M. I. Kalinin, was born in 1875 and has been a Bolshevik since the formation of the party. He was originally a metal worker, playing an active part in the working-class movement successively of St. Petersburg, Revel (in Esthonia), Tiflis (the capital of Georgia), and in Moscow. In 1919 he was elected President of the Russian Soviet Republic, and since the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics he has been its President.

V. M. Molotov, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, is 50 years old. He was the son of an office employee, and already at the age of 15 was taking an interest in Socialism. At Kazan university he played an active part in the Socialist movement, and at 19 was arrested and exiled for two years for his activities. When his sentence was up, he went to St. Petersburg and played an active part in organizing the Socialist students. He later was made Secretary of the Editorial Board of "Pravda," the Bolshevik newspaper, and this brought him into close personal contact with Lenin and Stalin.

Arrested, exiled, and back to activity in the working-class movement of Russia: such was the record of Molotov prior to 1917. In 1914 he reorganized the Bolshevik Party in Moscow, where the police had arrested numerous members on the outbreak of war. Arrested, he escaped from exile to

Petrograd, where he worked as a member of the Central Committee of the Party.

In August, 1917, when Lenin had been forced into hiding, Molotov played a leading part in the work of the Party, and in October he was elected to the Military Revolutionary Committee. From 1926 Molotov was Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, a post which he only gave up when appointed to be Prime Minister in 1930. From then on he remained Prime Minister, adding in 1939 the job of Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and specializing on this job in 1941.

Klim Voroshilov, for many years Commissar for Defence, and now Chairman of the Council for Defence of the Soviet Union, is, like Kalinin, a metal worker, having gone to work at the age of 15. Within four years of this he led his first strike, at the age of 19. From 1903 onwards Voroshilov played an active part in the Bolshevik party, and in the 1905 revolution was the leader of the workers of the railway shops at Lugansk in two big strikes. Although arrested after the second of these strikes, public protest forced his release.

From these early years onward, until 1917, Voroshilov, like the other Soviet leaders, led a life of activity in the working-class movement alternating with spells in prison. In 1906 he first met Lenin at the Bolshevik Congress at Stockholm, and in 1908 worked with Stalin among the oil workers of Baku.

Voroshilov's military career began with the struggle in 1918 against the forces of the Kaiser which were then invading Soviet territory. From then on his importance and popularity steadily increased until, in 1925, he was made Commissar for Defence of the U.S.S.R.

Timoshenko, who has now succeeded Voroshilov as Commissar for Defence, is of peasant origin. When the Red Army recently re-entered Bessarabia, Timoshenko met his brother, a poor peasant, for the first time in 22 years.

Finally, a word on the career of Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and now also Prime Minister. He, too, has a life-long record of service in the working-class movement of Russia. In 1879, at the little Georgian town of Gori, Stalin was born, the son of the shoe-maker of Jugashvili. The son, Joseph, was sent, at the age of 15, to a theological seminary. He rapidly got drawn into political discussions, and shortly afterward was expelled for his Socialist activities. From then onwards he became a full-time revolutionary Socialist, giving political education to the workers' circles in Tiflis, and then at Batumi, where he organized a demonstration of 6,000 workers who were fired on by the police. He was arrested, exiled, escaped. In 1905 he met Lenin for the first time; and from then, till 1917, his story was one of continuous struggle, of action on behalf of the working people of Russia against

the landlords, bankers and business men. It is little known in Britain that Stalin was twice in London at Congresses of the Party—held outside Russia for obvious reasons.

Joseph Jugashvili, in his political activities, used many names. Stalin is the one that has stuck, and to-day is known throughout the world.

Among his special contributions to Communist theory is his work on the national question. Always Stalin had at heart the cause of the oppressed nationalities of the world. In 1912 he had already written a book on the subject, and in 1917 he was made Commissar for Nationalities in the Soviet Government. It was his responsibility to ensure that under the Soviets complete equality should exist between all the nations of the old Russian Empire that now formed the Soviet Republic. In 1926 it was Stalin who was mainly responsible for the clauses in the Soviet Constitution giving complete equality to the nations of the Soviet Union, and again, in 1936, the "Stalin Constitution" gives particular emphasis to this aspect of the Soviet State.

Stalin is also a great soldier. Between 1918 and 1920, when the Soviets were fighting a desperate struggle for their existence, Stalin was sent by the Party to one critical front after another to ensure the adequate defence of the Republic. At all the points to which Stalin was sent defeats were turned into victories.

The Five-Year Plan, and the succeeding plans, together with the collectivization of agriculture, were also achieved under Stalin's realistic leadership.

Since Lenin's death Stalin has been the recognized leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Some people, judging from newspaper reports, think he is a dictator. He is the very reverse. This is what Stalin himself has said about leadership.

"Single persons cannot decide. The decisions of single persons are always, or nearly always, one-sided decisions. In every collegium, in every collective body, there are people whose opinion must be reckoned with. From the experience of three revolutions we knew that, approximately, out of every hundred decisions made by single persons that have been tested and corrected collectively ninety are one-sided. . . . In our leading body, the Central Committee of our Party, which guides all our soviet and party organizations, there are about seventy members. . . . Everyone is able to contribute his experience. . . . Since everyone is able to correct the errors of individual persons and since we pay heed to such corrections we arrive at more or less correct decisions."

Stalin is an elected member of the Central Committee of the Party. He is one of the Secretaries of the Central Committee, elected to that post by the Central Committee itself. Stalin's position as recognized leader of the Party and of the peoples of the Soviet Union is due to

nothing else but his own personal capacities, and the fact that he has proved in practice that he is the ablest member of the Party's Central Committee.

The history of these Soviet leaders explains, to some extent, why it proved impossible to achieve any close co-operation between the British National Government and the Government of the U.S.S.R. in 1939. How could the Birmingham business man, Neville Chamberlain, have co-operated with Kalinin and Voroshilov, who had led strikes when they were still young men? How could Sir John Anderson, ruler with an iron hand in Bengal, and champion of the Black and Tans in Ireland, possibly have co-operated with the party of Stalin, which insists on the right of all nations to complete equality and self-government?

The personnel of the Soviet government is as much a reflection of the Soviet system as the personnel of the British government reflects the British system. And the two are poles apart.

18. What They Have Achieved

NO consideration of developments in the Soviet Union can be adequate unless it includes a comparison between the Soviet Union as it is to-day and Tsarist Russia prior to 1917.

In 1917 Russia was a backward country where 80 per cent. of the people could not read or write. It had no modern large-scale industry, no automobile or aviation industries, no chemical industry, no agricultural machinery industry—though it included the largest single area under farming in the world. Farming was carried on by the peasants under a strip system similar to that of Britain in the Middle Ages, with the peasant family scratching the land with a wooden plough, and with famine every year in one part of the country or another. The housing of the people was such that one room per family was the average; in the factory districts the working people lived either in barracks attached to the factory or in basements. In Moscow alone it was estimated that there were 50,000 beggars and as many prostitutes.

After 1917 things were not easy. The railways of the country had been terribly overloaded during the war and much damage had been done. Industry was far below pre-war capacity, though even then it had been backward enough. And now, on top of this, the young Soviet Government had to face successive invasions by German troops, then by British, French, American, Japanese, Polish, and by smaller forces from a number of other countries. The re-

sult was that by 1921, when the intervention came to an end, farming production was down to a half and industrial production to one quarter of pre-war.

It was from this level of poverty in 1921 that the Soviets restored production to the pre-war level by 1928.

And it was in order to advance beyond this level that the first Five-Year Plan was introduced. This plan aimed at laying the foundations of modern large-scale industry in the U.S.S.R. as the only way to achieve adequate defence and a steadily rising standard of life. It aimed also at introducing modern large-scale agriculture on co-operative lines as the only way of achieving a steadily increasing food supply.

Here are some results of the first (1928-32), second (1933-37), and third (1938-42) Five-Year Plans, the third being still in progress:—

Tsarist Russia produced 29 million tons of coal a year. By 1938 the U.S.S.R. was producing 133 million tons, and it is planned, by 1942, to produce 230 million tons a year, nearly ten times the 1914 figure. Or take iron and steel. In 1913 Russia produced just over 4 million tons of iron and the same of steel. By 1938 output of iron had risen to 15 million tons, and of steel to 18 million tons, while the plan for 1942, the end of the third Five-Year Plan, is 22 and 27.5 million tons respectively. Electrical output has risen from 2 billion kilowatt hours in 1913 to 39 billion in 1938—an increase by almost 20 times.

In industries of which Tsarist Russia had none, such as automobile production, 200,000 cars were produced in 1937, and 400,000 are planned to be produced in 1942. Agricultural combine-harvesters, not produced at all in 1914, reached 10,000 in 1932, 55,000 in 1937, and further increases are provided for under the third Five-Year Plan.

In the industries supplying consumers' goods, boot and shoe production has risen from 20 million pairs in 1914 to 170 million in 1937, while an output of 235 million pairs is planned for 1942. The production of gramophones, unknown in Tsarist Russia, reached 60,000 in 1933, 800,000 in 1936, and has been steadily increasing since.

Consider agriculture: The grain harvest of 1913, a record year in Tsarist Russia, was 70 million tons; in 1935 it was 83 million tons, and in 1937 it was 115 million tons. Last year the Soviet Union produced three and a half times as much raw cotton as Tsarist Russia, and one and a half times as much sugar beet and flax.

Social services have also increased. We have seen something of educational developments already in Section 8. The following figures complete the picture. In the national republics the development of education is particularly striking. The number of school children in 1938 in the Ukraine was three times the 1914 figure, in Byelorussia and Georgia over four times; in Armenia over eight times; and

in Uzbekistan 64 times! The U.S.S.R. to-day has 182.3 school children for every 1,000 population, as compared with 144.9 for Britain, 135.6 for pre-war France, and still lower figures for Germany and Italy.

Health services may be gauged by the growth in the number of clinics from 1,230 in the whole of Tsarist Russia in 1914 to 9,496 in 1936, with a further increase since then. The number of maternity beds in hospitals has been doubled in the past four years and is 142,000 at the present time.

These figures, taken together, are symptomatic of the greatest all-round progress ever made by any country in history. Defence, too, has not been ignored. Expenditure on defence rose from 1.5 thousand million roubles in 1933 to 8 thousand million in 1935. It was early in 1936 that Hitler told Lord Londonderry of the very great strength of the air force and tank corps of the U.S.S.R. In the 1940 budget 57 thousand million roubles were provided for defence, seven times the 1935 figure! But the same budget provided at the same time for more than a 10 per cent. increase in expenditure on Social Services over the previous year.

What is all this aiming at? It is aiming at a state of society in which the level of production will be so high, higher than any country has ever so far achieved, that there will be enough of everything for everyone, so that "each may receive according to his needs." And at that high level of production, work will have become so worth while in itself for a limited period each day that each person "will contribute according to his ability." This is the aim of the Soviet Union. Its steady increase in production bids fair to achieve this within a generation or even sooner.

19. Revolution and Peace

HOW often do we meet somebody who says: "I'm a Socialist, but I'm not for bloody revolution like in Russia." Yet the Revolution in Russia in 1917 was a Revolution against bloodshed, not the other way round.

The Russian people in 1917 had had three years of war and had suffered very much more acutely than the people of Britain or France had done over the same period. The workers in industry, the peasants in the villages, and the soldiers in the army were tired of the shortage of even such a basic necessity as bread. The peasants were exasperated at seeing the landlords flourish on their income from rents while their tenants went hungry. And the soldiers were tired of fighting a war which brought them nothing but suffering and promised them nothing better for the future.

It was in this war that the Bolshevik Party put forward the slogan: "Peace, Bread and Land." And in 1917 the workers in the factories and the peasants in the villages more and more rapidly adopted the Bolshevik attitude to the war and demanded the complete overthrow of the old regime.

In November, 1917, the second Congress of Soviets proclaimed the Soviet Republic. And within 24 hours it appealed to the governments and peoples of the world to put an end to the bloodshed of the war, and to work with the Russian people for a "democratic peace" without the imposition of indemnities or the annexation of territory.

The other governments of the world did not listen to this appeal, but went on with their war until, in 1918, the German workers also resorted to revolution.

Therefore the Soviet Government had to make peace on its own. But it was not allowed to live in peace. For from early in 1918, first the German troops, then British troops, then French, American, Japanese, Polish, and the soldiers of a number of other states invaded Soviet soil in an attempt by their governments to put an end to this Socialist system which had come into being on one-sixth of the earth.

From 1918 to 1921 war raged. The Soviets repeatedly appealed for peace, on the one condition that all foreign troops be withdrawn from Russia; but the foreign armies, together with generals of the old Tsarist army, supported by ex-landlords, bankers and industrialists, continued with the war. It was this war which brought famine—one of the worst famines in Russian history.

Only by 1921 was the Soviet Government left in peace

—and this only occurred because, in a number of countries, Britain included, the working-class movement was resorting to direct action to put an end to this war of intervention.

From that time onwards the Soviet government's foreign policy was based on two main aims: First, to ensure that never again would foreign troops successfully attack the Socialist Republics; secondly, to preserve peace in the rest of the world, and to prevent the spread of war if it was humanly possible to do so. The Soviet government did not regard these two aims as separate, but as two aspects of the same policy. It knew that if war broke out in the world between capitalist states, then powerful forces would be at work in all the warring countries to switch the war against the U.S.S.R. Therefore the preservation of peace in general was a means also of preserving peace for the U.S.S.R. At the same time, while it consistently holds the view that wars are inevitable until the working people of all countries set up Socialist governments, it has never been the Soviet view that it is easier to achieve such socialist governments in war time than in peace time. Therefore, here again, in the Soviet view, the cause of international Socialism is better served by peace than by war.

But, quite apart from its own defence, there is another reason why the Soviet Union, more than any other country in the world, should have been interested in peace, for it is the only country where literally not a single citizen has anything to profit from war.

Since, in the Soviet Union, all industry is nationalized, there are no groups of individuals making money out of war or war preparations; no arms manufacturers to whom war is so terribly profitable; no food profiteers; nobody, in short, who finds that war means profits.

And since, in the Soviet Union, there is no unemployment, there are no working people placed in the invidious position in which they find themselves in this country, knowing that only the continuation of war can keep them in regular employment. Mr. Arthur Greenwood, before he joined the government, foresaw many millions of unemployed after the war. But this means that many million men and women, if they value their jobs, are torn between wanting peace and wanting the war to go on for ever! This tragic position is not suffered by anybody in the Soviet Union.

It follows from these facts that, on Soviet soil, there is not a person who has anything to gain personally from war, a thing which, sadly enough, cannot be said about Britain or Germany, Italy or the U.S.A.

This is why, in its foreign policy, the Soviet Union has consistently worked for peace

20. A Socialist Peace Policy

WHAT should be the policy of a Socialist country in a world dominated by capitalist governments, that is, by governments aiming at preserving the private ownership of the land, the factories, and the banks? Clearly, to save its people from being drawn into wars provoked by the governments of such countries and, above all, to ensure that the armies of such governments shall not trample on its soil.

This demands that such a government should exercise every possible effort to prevent war. And, if war nevertheless breaks out, it should exercise every effort to prevent the spreading of such war or wars.

This, since 1917, sums up the policy of the Soviet government.

We have seen how it appealed to the governments and peoples of the world for an immediate peace without indemnities or annexations in November 1917, and how, in spite of this, it was invaded, and foreign troops continued their intervention until 1921.

From 1921 onwards, when there was the possibility of peaceful relations for some time to come, the Soviet government proposed disarmament, and in 1921 the first Disarmament Conference was held in Moscow on the invitation of the Soviet government. The Soviets made concrete proposals for disarmament—the other states rejected them.

Later, at the World Disarmament Conference, the Soviet government proposed universal and complete disarmament; a proposal which was dismissed outright. It gradually modified its proposal until, at the end of the conference, it simply moved what had originally been an American proposal for one third reduction in all armaments. Even the Americans voted against—for they, too, had their arms manufacturers egging on the government not to disarm! It was at that same Conference that Lord Londonderry, representing Britain, defended the use of the bombing plane. It is thus historic justice that we—not the Russians—feel the bombs to-day!

From 1931 onwards there began to develop the present war situation. Japan's invasion of Manchuria was followed by Italy's invasion of Abyssinia and Hitler's seizure of power in Germany pledged to a policy of armed conquest. The policy of the Soviet Union in this situation was to stop the spread of war. Therefore the U.S.S.R. was first to apply sanctions against Italy, and expressed readiness to enforce further sanctions; it gave full diplomatic and material support to both Spain and China (a support which is still being given in the case of China) knowing that a victory here for the

invaders would mean further war, whereas a victory for the invaded would be a firm blow to prevent further adventures. After Austria's invasion the U.S.S.R. called for an immediate European conference to prevent further aggression; and in the case of Czechoslovakia the U.S.S.R. asked the League to intervene, and called on the French and Czech governments to join it in military talks according to their pacts of mutual assistance. Throughout this period the British government opposed every Soviet proposal to prevent the spread of war, and the French government refused military talks at the time of the Czech crisis. Then the governments of Germany, Italy, Britain and France jointly presented an ultimatum to the Czechs at Munich.

Early in 1939, in a final desperate effort to prevent another world war, the U.S.S.R. proposed a Peace Front by which Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. would jointly have guaranteed all the smaller countries of Eastern Europe against both open invasion and against indirect oppression—that is, the activities of the "Fifth Column". These proposals, by August, had been definitely rejected: The Polish government, supported by Mr. Chamberlain, stated that it did not desire the help of the Red Army even if invaded by Germany. And the British government refused to join with the U.S.S.R. in guaranteeing the smaller countries against indirect aggression.

So the Peace Front was impossible. Therefore, as the next best thing, the Soviet government ensured that if there was a war as a result of the reckless attitude of the British, French and Polish governments, the Soviet people at any rate would not be drawn into a conflict which could have been prevented. Therefore it signed a non-aggression pact with Germany. This laid down that now, if a conflict arose, the U.S.S.R. would be neutral. The U.S.S.R. was not ready to risk a single life for the war aims of Hitler; nor was it ready to risk a single life for the sake of those governments which had flatly rejected the Peace Front.

Thus, in the second World War, the Soviet Union remained at peace for nearly two years, giving security to its original 170,000,000 people, together with further additions made to the Soviet population in the course of the war.

The Soviet government made it clear that, as a neutral, it was ready to have normal diplomatic and trading relations with all countries. The German government for a time established such normal relations, and the British government pursued a policy of consistent hostility to the U.S.S.R. Even a trade agreement which would have given timber and oil, wheat and minerals to Britain, was not signed in spite of repeated Soviet offers.

The Soviet people watched a world in which no country was safe from war, while their own government built up its strength against any crisis which might arise and against any enemy who might attack it.

21. Russia and This War

THE present war, in the Soviet view, was the direct and inevitable result of the policy of building up Nazi Germany pursued by the British government until August, 1939, in the hope that the German government would go to war with the U.S.S.R. It considered the rejection of the Peace Front to have been part of this policy. The Soviet-German non-aggression pact was a means by which the German government avoided war on its Eastern frontier, while the U.S.S.R. avoided for a further two years that war with Germany in preparation for which the British government had steadily strengthened Germany for seven years.

From the time the war began, the Soviet Union declared its neutrality. But it did not just sit by and watch from afar. On the contrary, it took all necessary steps to safeguard the frontiers of the Soviet Union. It knew that only in so far as it did this could it make certain that Britain would not turn the war against the U.S.S.R. and that the German government would never be in a position successfully to reverse the policy laid down in the non-aggression pact.

Therefore, when the Polish government that had rejected the Peace Front had fled, the Red Army gave its protection to the 13,000,000 people of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia at a time when no other government in the world could protect them. Refugees, pouring out of Poland, poured back into the territory occupied by the Red Army.

Further the Soviet government offered pacts of mutual assistance to the small Baltic States which, without such pacts, were faced inevitably with the choice of becoming a German or a British war base, a fate such as later befell Norway. The governments of these countries signed such pacts and their peoples were thus saved from being drawn into the war.

The Soviet government offered to Finland a similar pact, but the offer was rejected, the Finnish government stating that it preferred to remain a neutral of the Scandinavian type, i.e. like Sweden and Norway. We all know what happened to Norway, and while the Finnish government had the right to run the risk of precipitating this fate for Finland if it wished, the Soviet government could not tolerate this happening to a country whose frontier ran only 20 miles from Leningrad, a city with a population almost as large as the whole of that of Finland. Therefore the Soviet government requested a change of frontier, such as would have made Leningrad and the approach to Leningrad secure, but

which would have given Finland twice as much territory in exchange. After a period of friendly negotiation, the Finnish attitude became suddenly more hostile, and resort was had to frontier incidents. The Soviet view was that these were inspired by the British and French governments—a view confirmed in March, 1940, when the British government offered 100,000 British and French soldiers, together with arms, if only the Finnish government would continue war with the U.S.S.R.

In face of this situation the Soviet government resorted to armed force to put a stop to the frontier incidents and to acquire a frontier for the U.S.S.R. that gave it real security. By now Nazi troops are in Finland. The U.S.S.R. acted just in time.

The Moscow correspondent of the Conservative "Times" later wrote that Soviet policy had been consistently to keep out of the war, and that in Finland "the Soviet Union concluded a peace treaty as soon as its objectives were gained." The later "peaceful" occupation of Finland by the Nazis confirmed the correctness of the Soviet's action.

The war in the West led to the rapid collapse of France. This, in turn, caused a certain revival of fascist Fifth Column intrigues in and around the Baltic governments, where anti-Soviet activities began to increase, including attacks on Red troops stationed in Lithuania under the Pact of Mutual Assistance. The Soviet government demanded new governments free from such Fifth Columnists, which meant, in effect, real People's anti-fascist governments. Such governments were formed and immediately called for general elections. In these elections an overwhelming majority was won by the Workers' and Peasants' Alliance which stood for Socialism, and for entry as equal republics into the Soviet Union.

In the South, since 1918, the territory of Bessarabia had been in Rumanian hands, though this seizure of Russian territory had never been recognized by the Soviets. However, the Soviet government had repeatedly stated that it had no intention of going to war for the return of Bessarabia. When, however, there came the time when it could retrieve this territory without going to war, it did so. It is reported that more than 100,000 people from Rumania went of their own accord to live in the new Soviet territory. The town of Galatz alone was reported as being practically deserted, because 38,000 working people had of their own accord crossed the frontier to live on Soviet soil!

Thus, during the first year of war, while remaining neutral as between the great capitalist states, the U.S.S.R. added territory occupied by 23,000,000 people to the Socialist sixth of the world. Except in the case of Finland, where this was an urgent question concerning the defence of a vital frontier, warfare was avoided. In a speech on August 1, 1940

Molotov pointed out that the population of the U.S.S.R. had been increased to 193,000,000 during the first year of the war, and concluded with the following statement:

"We must always bear in mind Stalin's words that 'We must keep our people in a state of mobilization and preparedness in the face of the danger of military attack so that no "accident" and no tricks of our foreign enemies could catch us unawares.' If we all remember this, our sacred duty, no events will catch us unawares, and we will achieve new and even more glorious successes for the Soviet Union."

And Marshal Timoshenko, on May Day, 1941, said—"It is not surprising that the peoples of all the belligerent countries strive for the elimination of war, and we trust they will attain peace, and the sooner the better."

22. The Red Army

THE peaceful expansion of the U.S.S.R., the liberation of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, the adherence of the three Baltic states and the return of Bessarabia, bringing 23,000,000 more citizens into the U.S.S.R., have all been possible only on the basis of the enormous armed strength of the Soviet Union. And it is clear that the Nazi government would never have signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviets unless it had been absolutely convinced of the extreme desirability of avoiding, for some time at least, a war with the Soviet Union.

Already early in 1936 Hitler told Lord Londonderry that even then he considered the U.S.S.R. to be "the greatest military power" with "the strongest army, the strongest Tank Corps and the strongest Air Force in the world." In 1935 the U.S.S.R. had spent 8 billion roubles on defence. In 1940 it spent 57 billion roubles; more than seven times its expenditure of 1935.

What, then, is the effective strength of the Red Army? Naturally, detailed figures are not published, for obvious reasons. However, a moderate estimate in early 1939 gave the following figures: The Red Army could mobilize 11,000,000 men with two years' military training; and had six to ten thousand tanks. In 1938 the U.S.S.R. was estimated to have 10,000 to 12,000 planes as against 9,500 for the Axis powers and 10,000 for Britain and France. In March of the same year Voroshilov stated that the total weight of metal discharged per minute by a Red Army corps was 78 tons, as compared with 59 for Germany and 60 for France. As regards the Air Force, Voroshilov stated that in one flight the Air Force could carry 4,160 tons of bombs, as compared

with half that weight in 1934. Bombers were now already in use with a ceiling of 45,000 feet, and a speed far in excess of 300 miles an hour.

Already, early in 1939, it was recognized in the semi-official publication, Jane's "Fighting Ships," that the Soviet submarine fleet amounted to 111 units with 37 under construction, as compared with Germany's 59, Italy's 86 and 20 under construction, and Japan's 59. All this was before the Soviets entered upon a large-scale naval construction programme aiming at building one of the most powerful fleets in the world!

While figures are impressive, deeds are even more so. Writing of the conflict with Japan on the Mongolian-Manchurian frontier in September, 1939, "The Times" Tokio correspondent stated on August 27, 1940:—"In this fighting Japan's best forces were beaten by Soviet flame-throwing tanks. . . . The disputed district, through which the Halha river runs, was left in Russian hands. The Japanese admitted 18,000 casualties. A truce was unexpectedly signed as the Japanese were about to renew the fight." Since when, it will be noted, the Japanese government has made no further attempt to risk a conflict with the Red Army.

The fighting in Finland gives another example of the power of the Red Army. Most significant, perhaps, is the fact that although the Finnish, British and French general staffs all took it for granted that General Mannerheim would not require reinforcements before May, 1940, the Mannerheim Line had been completely smashed by March. Thus the Red Army defeated the Finnish general staff a whole two months before the Finnish, British or French governments had ever thought possible.

Writing after the Finnish war was over, the following comments appeared in the two leading British Conservative newspapers:

"The Russians have displayed an unexpected degree of competence in their staff work . . . that these attacks should be well co-ordinated and carried out without confusion and with considerable artillery support is certainly surprising."—"Daily Telegraph," March 4.) "These Russian divisions have fought with a courage which has rarely been equalled by Russian soldiers in this century."—"Daily Telegraph," March 6.)

"Most of the armament was first-class stuff—anti-tank rifles, machine pistols, machine-guns, and a new type of revolver that does not jam. The Russians, indeed, must have a remarkable inventiveness."

"By the time the war had ended, the Russians had achieved a remarkable fighting form. Moreover, they had experimented intelligently themselves, introducing such new devices as armoured sleighs, three-storeyed dug-outs, and dummy encampments to draw bombing aeroplanes to anti-aircraft guns.

"The Russians found the war costly in men, material and prestige, but yet it may be suggested that it was cheap for what they got out of it. . . . The Red Army now has troops who are experienced, from whom can be drawn new officers and N.C.O.'s. There is a sound basis for improvement which, properly built upon, may have a profound effect on the future course of history."—("The Times," March 18.)

These tributes, in view of all the attacks which were directed at the Red Army during the fighting, are surely evidence enough of the real effectiveness of the Red Army.

But, quite apart from its purely military strength, certain additional factors must be taken into account of vital importance in a war of any length.

First, the Soviet Union is the only country in the world whose great industrial centres are so placed that, with few exceptions, they are completely out of range of any possible enemy bombardment.

Secondly, the Red Army has the best morale of any army in the world for two main reasons: Every Red Army man knows that he is fighting for his land and his home and his factory against governments who wish once again to turn such land and factories into a source of landlords' rent and shareholders' profits. No workers or peasants could relish such a prospect. And further, within the Red Army there is no class distinction. The Red Army is the one army in the world (with the possible exception of those sections of the Chinese Army where Communist influence is strong) in which promotion is due entirely to personal merit, and in which the officers are all drawn from the ranks of the industrial workers, the peasants, and the professional and office workers. It is the one country in the world where sons of landlords and factory owners play no part whatsoever in the leadership of the army. This democracy in organization, and this elimination of class distinction, is not the least reason for the strength of the Red armed forces in the world to-day.

Finally, there is the policy of the Red Army. The field orders of the Red Army state the following:

"The winning over to the side of the proletarian revolution of the working and peasant masses of the enemy army as well as the population of the field of action is the principal condition for victory." In other words, the Red Army has a policy, the policy of Socialism, which it offers to the people of enemy territory.

The Socialism of the Red Army is one of its greatest assets. It was no accident that the peasants of Western Byelorussia started taking over the landed estates when they heard that the Red Army was on the way; or that 100,000 people went to Bessarabia from Rumania after the Red Army's occupation; or that, in the Baltic countries, Soviet governments were enthusiastically created by the peoples of these territories.

The foregoing chapters were written and printed before June 22, 1941.

To-day the peoples of the U.S.S.R. are united in defending their territory against the Nazi aggressors. As we have seen, everybody in the U.S.S.R. gains from peace and suffers from war; everybody in the U.S.S.R. wants nothing more than a lasting peace between the nations.

In Britain, too, apart from those to whom war brings profit, the vast majority of the people also want lasting peace in conditions in which war cannot arise, because war is no longer profitable to anyone.

Therefore the masses of the people of Britain and the whole people of the U.S.S.R. have a common aim.

Therefore the fight of the U.S.S.R. against Fascist aggression is in the interests of the people of all countries.

Mr. Churchill has declared that all possible technical and economic aid will be given to Russia in this struggle.

It is for the masses of the British people to see that this is done. The more rapid the united victory of Great Britain and of the Socialist State, the sooner can Europe be re-organized on lines which, once and for all, make war and profiteering from war a thing of the past.

From the Speech of J. V. Stalin, delivered to the Moscow Soviet on November 6 on the occasion of the 24th Anniversary of the Revolution.

Anglo-American Democratic Liberties

CAN we possibly consider the Hitlerites to be Socialists? No—it is impossible. In fact the Hitlerites are the sworn enemies of Socialism, the worst reactionaries and Black Hundreds* who have deprived the working-class and peoples of Europe of their elementary democratic liberties. In order to cover up their reactionary nature, the Hitlerites abuse the Anglo-American system of government and call them "plutocratic regimes." But in Britain and the U.S.A. there do exist elementary democratic liberties. There are trade unions of workers and employees. There are working-class parties. There is a parliament. While in Germany, under Hitler's regime, all these institutions have been destroyed. One only needs to compare these two sets of facts in order to understand the reactionary nature of the Hitler regime, and the whole falsity of the German Fascist pratings about the Anglo-American "plutocratic regimes."

Indeed, Hitler's regime is a copy of that other reactionary

* Ultra-reactionary gangster organisation created by the police in Tsarist Russia.

regime which existed in Russia under Tsarism. It is well known that the Hitlerites have also eagerly taken away the rights of the workers and intelligentsia and the rights of the peoples, just as the Tsarist regime took them away, and that they also willingly organize mediaeval Jewish pogroms just as the Tsarist regime organized them.

And if these open imperialists and worst reactionaries continue to masquerade in the togas of "Nationalists" and "Socialists," they do this in order to deceive the people, to fool simpletons and to hide under the flag of "Nationalism" and "Socialism" their real piratical and imperialist nature. The crows array themselves in the feathers of a peacock, but no matter how much the crows array themselves in peacock's feathers, they do not cease to be crows.

"We must at all costs," says Hitler, "strive to have a German conquest of the world. If we want to create the great German Empire, we must first of all crush and exterminate the Slav people—the Russians, Poles, Slovaks, Czechs, Bulgars, Ukrainians, Byelo-Russians. There are no reasons why we should not do this."

"Man," says Hitler, "is sinful from birth, and can be ruled only with the help of force. In dealing with him all methods are permissible. When policy demands it one must lie, betray and even kill."

"Kill all who are against us," says Goering. "Kill, kill. You do not bear any responsibility for this. I do. So kill."

"I liberate man," says Hitler, "from the degrading chimera which is called conscience. Conscience, like education, cripples a man. I have the advantage that I am not restrained by any considerations of a theoretical or moral nature."

One of the orders of the German High Command, dated September 25, to the 489th Infantry Regiment, which was found on a dead German N.C.O., states: "I order you to open fire on any Russian as soon as he appears at a distance of six hundred metres. The Russian must learn that he is faced by an implacable enemy, from whom he can expect no mercy."

One of the declarations of the German Command to their soldiers, which was found on a dead lieutenant named Gustav Siegel, a native of Frankfurt-on-Main, stated: "You have no heart or nerves. They are not needed in war. Destroy all pity and sympathy in yourselves. Kill every Soviet Russian. Do not stop even if before you stands an old man or woman, girl or boy—kill! By this you will save yourselves from destruction. You will assure the future of your family and win eternal glory."

This is the programme and the instructions of the leaders of the Hitlerite party and the Hitlerite Command. These are the programme and the instructions of people who have lost all semblance of humanity, who have fallen to the level of wild beasts.

The "New Order" is a Volcano

The German invaders have enslaved the peoples of the European continent from France to the Soviet Baltic, from Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and Soviet Byelo-Russia to the Balkans and Soviet Ukraine. They have taken away their elementary democratic liberties. They have taken away their right to dispose of their own destinies, snatched away their bread, their meat and grain, and turned them into slaves.

They have crucified the Czechs, the Poles and the Serbs, and decided that on the basis of this European domination they can now build up the world dominion of Germany. This is called their "New Order in Europe." But what is this "basis"? What is this "New Order"? Only Hitler's self-opinionated fools do not see that the "New Order in Europe" and the notorious "basis" of this "Order" is a volcano, ready to erupt at any moment and to bury the German imperialist house of cards.

They refer to Napoleon, assuring us that Hitler acts like Napoleon and that he resembles Napoleon in everything. In the first place, however, we should not forget Napoleon's fate. In the second place, Hitler resembles Napoleon no more than a kitten resembles a lion! Napoleon fought the forces of reaction with the support of the progressive forces of his time, whereas Hitler is supported by the reactionary forces and is fighting the progressive forces.

Only Hitler's idiots in Berlin cannot understand that the oppressed peoples of Europe will struggle and rise against Hitler's tyranny. Who can doubt that the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A. will afford full support to the peoples of Europe in their struggle for freedom against Hitler's tyranny?

The second factor is the instability of the German rear itself—that of the Hitlerite aggressors. While the Hitlerites were busy gathering up the Germany which had been split up by the Versailles Treaty, they could count on the support of the German people, inspired by the ideal of the restoration of Germany. But as soon as this task was fulfilled and the Hitlerites began to pursue an imperialist conquest of foreign lands and subjugation of foreign peoples, converting the peoples of Europe and the peoples of the U.S.S.R. into the relentless foes of present-day Germany, there took place in the German people a profound change of feeling, directed against the continuation of the war, for its termination.

For over two years this sanguinary conflict, whose end is not yet in sight, has been waged. Millions of lives have been sacrificed. There are hunger, poverty, epidemics and an atmosphere of growing hostility. The stupid policy of Hitler has turned the people of the U.S.S.R. into the sworn enemies of present-day Germany.

All this inevitably turned the German people against the

unnecessary and piratical war. Only Hitler's fools do not understand that it is not only the European rear, but also the German rear of the German Fascist Army which is a volcano ready for eruption and ready to bury Hitler's adventurers.

The third and final factor is the coalition of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A., against the German Fascist imperialists. It is a fact that Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union have united in a single camp, with the object of smashing Hitler's imperialists and their predatory armies.

The present war is a war of motors. It will be won by those who possess a superiority in motor production. If we aggregate the production of motors of the U.S.A., Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., then we get a superiority of motor production over Germany in a ratio of three to one. In this lies one of the reasons of the inevitable destruction of Hitler's robber imperialism.

The recent Three-Power Conference held in Moscow with the representative of Great Britain, Lord Beaverbrook, and the United States representative, Mr. Harriman, decided systematically to help our country with tanks and aircraft. As is well known, we are already receiving tanks and aircraft on the basis of its decisions.

Even at an earlier date, Great Britain arranged for supplies to our country of such deficient materials as aluminium, lead, tin, nickel and rubber. If we add to it the fact that recently the U.S.A. decided to grant a loan of one thousand million dollars to the Soviet Union, we can say with certainty that the coalition of the U.S.A., Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. is a reality which will grow to the benefit of our common cause of liberation.

These are the factors determining the inevitable collapse of German Fascist imperialism.

Lenin distinguished two types of wars—predatory, i.e., unjust wars, and wars of liberation, i.e., just wars.

The Germans are carrying on now a predatory, an unjust war, aiming at the seizure of foreign territory and the subjugation of foreign peoples. That is why all honest people must rise against the German invaders as their enemies.

In contradistinction to Hitlerite Germany, the Soviet Union and its Allies are carrying on a war of liberation, a just war, aiming at the liberation of the enslaved peoples of Europe and the U.S.S.R. from Hitler's tyranny. That is why all honest people must support the armies of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the other Allies, as armies of liberation.

We have not, and we cannot have, such war aims as the seizure of foreign territory, the subjugation of foreign peoples, whether it concerns the peoples and territories of Europe, or the peoples and territories of Asia, including Iran. Our first aim consists in liberating our territories and our peoples from the German Fascist yoke.

We have not, and we cannot have, such war aims as the forcing of our will and our regime on the Slavonic or any other enslaved European peoples who are expecting our assistance. Our aim consists in helping these peoples in their struggle for liberation against Hitlerite tyranny, and later permitting them freely to settle their own destiny in their own land. No interference in the internal affairs of other people!

But in order to achieve these aims we must first crush the military might of the German aggressors. We must destroy all the German invaders to the very last one; all those who have penetrated into our country in order to subjugate it.

But for this purpose it is necessary for our Army and Navy to have an active and effective assistance from the whole of our country. It is imperative that our workers and employees, men and women, should work untiringly in factories, supplying the front with ever-increasing quantities of tanks, anti-tank rifles and guns, field guns, mortars, machine-guns, rifles and ammunition; that our collective-farmers, men and women, should work in their fields untiringly, giving the front and the country more and more bread, meat, raw materials for industry; that the whole of our country and all our peoples of the U.S.S.R. be organised into a single military camp, engaged, together with our Army and Navy, in the great war of liberation for the honour and freedom of our motherland, for the rout of the German armies.

This is now our task. We can and must fulfil this task.

Only by fulfilling this task and smashing the German invaders can we win a lasting and just peace.

For the complete rout of the German invaders!

For the liberation of all enslaved peoples groaning under the yoke of Hitler's tyranny!

Long live the indissoluble friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union! Long live our Red Army and our Red Navy! Long live our glorious motherland!

Our cause is just! Victory will be ours!

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